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BOOK FIRST
Old Testament Prophecy

PART I
Introductory. General Principles

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BOOK FIRST—OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

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Author's Foreword

IT IS now nearly twelve years since the author first took up the pen, to produce a moderate volume upon the Book of Revelation after the type of his work on the Book of Daniel. He thought to introduce the writing with a chapter on antecedent prophecy as a porch to the main structure. But two considerations quite materially changed his course. He remembered how many years of first-hand Bible study and teaching it was before the revealing Spirit gave the Book of Revelation to him in body constructively and called him to teach it to others. He remembered that the reason for this was shown him to be that the true understanding of the prophecy of the last book depended so much upon a thorough understanding of all preceding prophetic Scripture, that any other order of progress would be untimely and illogical. This, again, caused the author to see that, unless he conducted his readers down through the whole prophetic pathway of the Bible, he would be running the risk of not having his readers grasp the Book of Revelation with him eye to eye without its being a case to be deplored of bidding for the readers' blind acceptance of "Stevens' views."

It is the hope of the author that his task has been so performed that many an inquiring, studious reader will find the constructive organism of Scriptural prophecy opening up before him in self-evident meaning, like the path of light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The author is thankful if the nearly forty years of patient, prayerful first-hand reading of the whole Bible in order, time after time, in entire dependence upon its self-evident sense under the anointing of

the Spirit, has qualified him to help others comparatively quickly to come into their inheritance of an open Book to an opened understanding.

W. C. STEVENS.

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May 1, 1928.*

Introduction to Book First

PROPHECY is described by the Apostle Peter as a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and to this aspect of Scriptural teaching he urges us to take heed.

We welcome, with sincere appreciation, the appearance of a work in which prophetic truth is traced throughout the Scriptures in consecutive order, as it is in this writing from the fluent pen of our esteemed friend, Principal W. C. Stevens. We know of no other production that so fully presents the unity and harmony of prophetic truth, showing that prophecy is indeed the "leading-string of progress and the constructive factor throughout the Bible."

In this book the author vividly shows that the Gospel dates from eternity, and it was on hand to catch man as soon as he fell, and that prophecy has for its grandest theme the precious truth of Redemption through the coming Messiah.

The first volume of the series is designed to present a full survey of prophecy in the Bible leading up to a climax of prophetic teaching in the book of Revelation, and the writer has well expressed this plan in the following words: "One is not prepared to read Revelation until he has reached this terminal over the broad-gauge track running all the way through from Genesis." Prophecy is presented in its twofold nature as both didactic or hortatory communications from God to man by a messenger; and also as predictive prophecy or history revealed in advance by God to man.

The Christology of the Old Testament is emphasized and developed in a unique and helpful manner, and the reader is more deeply impressed than ever before with the unity of God's plan of Salvation throughout all the

Dispensations of man's history, and that the Godhead existed in a glorious Trinity in the past ages as well as in the present age of the Grace of God.

We consider this extraordinary work to be one that will prove of great benefit to Bible students everywhere, and it should have a place in the library of every Christian worker and earnest searcher of the Scriptures.

We wish for it a very wide circulation, for the sake of the message that it contains; and that the ripe and spiritual instructions of the Author may be enjoyed by as large a circle of God's children as may be possible.

J. D. WILLIAMS.

CHAPTER I.

PROPHECY THE CONSTRUCTIVE FACTOR OF THE BIBLE.

SUCH is the character and the structure of the whole material of the sacred writings, that we may justly expect to find the Book of Revelation to be the CROWN-JEWEL OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY.

THE BIBLE AN ORGANIC BODY.

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of its component writings, and the wide diversity of these writings and of their periods of composition, the Bible is not a conglomerate volume. On the contrary, it is a perfectly organized body of revelation. Moreover, while numberless isolated fragments of Scripture embody, each in miniature, the entire compass of divine revelation,—like drops of water mirroring severally the whole expanse of the sky—yet the Bible taken as a whole is free from all fault of undue copiousness, of redundancy or tedious repetition, as well as free from perplexing divergencies, tantalizing obscurities, or doubtful meanings. Therefore, the entire word of inspiration is necessary to a full-rounded, well-balanced understanding of God's revelation.

And it is not by chance, but by a wise superintendence of God's Spirit, that the books of the Bible are arranged in just the order they are. This order is such as to call for the study of the Bible first and mainly in practically regular progression, from Genesis to Malachi, and from Matthew to Revelation. There is in the unfolding of the entire revelation an orderly advance which needs to be unbrokenly followed, or the most earnest student will very likely fail ever to perceive and comprehend

the scheme of revelation as a whole and in its proportionate parts.

Here, doubtless, lay the cause of the painful confusion and hopeless ignorance of those two devoted believers whom the just-risen Jesus accosted on the way to Emmaus. For their enlightenment they needed just such an orderly expository trip through the Old Testament as Jesus took with them. For, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets [which with the Jews included the historical books], he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

It is, then, no mere accident that the Book of Revelation concludes the whole Bible; it is designedly and logically so. And, as the entire Scriptures constitute an organized body of revelation,—which has grown up in a living, designed way, and practically as the different parts, from Genesis to Revelation, are arranged—it is evident that there is but one way of coming to the study of Revelation; that way is by intelligent and thorough comprehension of all previous Scriptures. We may be pardoned, then, if we ask the reader to accompany us in a preparatory Biblical sketch, which shall in due time enable us to open the Book of Revelation together from a common point of view,—a point of view projected, not by private opinion, but by the self-evident unfolding of the Bible itself as a whole.

PREDICTIVE PROPHECY THE CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENT OF THE WHOLE BIBLE.

Before entering upon this pre-Revelation sketch of the Bible, we will in this introductory chapter look into the wondrous volume of God's Word far enough to pick up the mystic thread which binds it all together in the one divine purpose which it is intended to unfold.

The first chapter of Genesis culminates in the creature man,—created male and female, created in Christ "the

express image" and likeness of God, created for happy residence and noble dominion as Christ's steward over all the earth. The physical and social order arranged by God for such a career is laid out before us in the second chapter, as well as the order of man's accountability to his Maker and Lord. But in the third chapter the manner of man's fall from his created state and mission is narrated.

Right here narrative begins to incorporate prediction. In Gen. 3:15 God discloses His plan of saving man from his fallen state and position through a Savior and Redeemer human-born. From this point the narrative proceeds on a genealogical principle of advance, but under rigid restriction, looking straight forward down a "sacred line" to the Coming One.

Rapidly the successive generations pass in procession until a name is reached in Gen. 11:26 which holds the leading personal position in all further Biblical history. It is the name of Abram. To this man God promised (Gen. 12:1-3) that his posterity should constitute the branch of mankind through which all families of the race should be blessed. The Book of Genesis—covering over twenty-three hundred years according to the Hebrew text and thirty-seven hundred years according to the Septuagint text—closes when that particular portion of Abram's posterity to which the covenant appertained—reaching through Isaac and Jacob—had grown to a great family of twelve (thirteen) branches.

Every Bible reader will at once recognize that the rest of the Old Testament, excepting Job, directly concerns this particular Hebrew race; and that at every stage of progress the narrative is marked by this peculiarity, that the eye is repeatedly uplifted from a present historical situation to the final issue predicted back in Gen. 12:3. And all the way through it is likewise made plain that the hope of Israel lies in the Coming One, who in Gen. 3:15 is promised as the world's

Redeemer and Saviour. It follows, therefore, that race-wide blessing is made dependent upon the fulfillment first of the blessing which was promised to Abram's posterity through that Coming One.

We all know, further, that the four Gospels of the New Testament consist of a brief account of the actual appearing and ministry of this promised One. The one great question on the mind of Jewry in His day was, Is this Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God and the King of Israel? (John 1:49.) Although rejected nationally, yet the Gospels leave us looking for that rejected Jesus to return to Jerusalem in all heavenly authority, power and glory, as the King of Israel.

Finally, the remainder of the New Testament crowns its preaching and teaching—that "this same Jesus" is the world's living Saviour—with the continual reiteration of "that blessed hope" of "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-14).

Therefore, an intelligent reading of the Bible—in order and in entirety—soon discovers that the line of progress in the construction of the body of revelation is not that of a system of doctrine, or that of an exhibit of spiritual experiences, or that of a philosophy of ethics. In due time—after mature acquaintance with the Bible in its entirety, and with all its passages severally in their evident sense relative to their context, to the purport of the particular books to which they severally belong, as well as to the concurrent testimony of the whole volume—such systems as have been mentioned may be constructed by human hands. Yet, even then, these systems are but human constructions, indirectly Biblical and lacking the final authority of revelation. And so far have writers of systematic theology, of systems of ethics and of spiritual experience, fallen short of doing their work after the method just outlined, that, instead of having the essential unity of faith, experience

and practice among Christians which should be our happy condition, we are left to witness the sad spectacle of confusion and division, of ever-multiplying isms and sects. But the natural and orderly reading of the Bible as it is placed in our hands soon discovers, as we have seen, that prophecy constitutes the leading-string of progress, the constructive factor throughout the Bible.

By prophecy we are meaning divine prediction, the unveiling of the future. Now this peculiarity marks the rise and progress of predictive prophecy in the Bible, that it is not mere blank, irrelative prediction, —a kind of fantastic fortune-telling. Biblical material consists largely of historical record; and such is the relation of history to prophecy in the Bible, that the Jews rightly classified them together. History furnished occasion for prophecy; for history—the current conditions of fallen humanity—appealed for light upon its dark and inscrutable mystery. And prophecy is the revelation, out of exclusive divine foreknowledge, of the yet distant issue of past and of present interests and occurrences. At once upon the fall of man God began to predict the recovery of the fallen, the victory of the vanquished over his oppressor. God only could fore-know this, because God's grace alone could devise it, God's authority alone could ordain it, and God's power in His Son alone could execute it. So, from Genesis 3: 15 to the close of Revelation, the connecting, integrating element of Scripture as a whole is this one hope-giving, faith-centering perspective.

THE WHOLE BIBLE CHRISTO-CENTRIC.

This does not deny the Christo-centric organization of all revelation; it corresponds to it. This is clearly attested by Christ Himself in Luke 24: 44: "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses [the Pen-

tateuch], and in the prophets [the historical books], concerning me." Note, that Jesus hereby linked all His own teaching to the Old Testament Scriptures. Then note, that He viewed those Scriptures in predictive character,—“must be fulfilled.” And finally note, that He comprehends in one progressive predictive construction the whole body of the Old Testament writings.

It is not to be taken from the foregoing remarks, that the Christo-centric character of the Bible consists solely, or even primarily, in its consistent and orderly progress in foreshadowing the Coming One. It is rather the living, although invisible, presence of that Coming One—from creation to incarnation, and from ascension to glory-revelation—as well as His brief visible presence in the flesh, that constitutes the Christo-centric element of all the Bible. It remains true, however, that the organizing factor of the Bible as a literary structure and unity is the Messianic prophecy.

PROPHECY IS ESSENTIALLY THE GOSPEL IN ALL THE BIBLE

Neither does the recognition of prophecy as the integrating factor of the whole Biblical organism deny the right of preëminence to the Gospel; it establishes that right. For, what is the Gospel but the glad tidings of what has already been fulfilled of God's promises in that Coming One, and of what yet remains to be as surely fulfilled in Him? Paul identified Gospel with prophecy when, standing before Agrippa, he declared: “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come” (Acts 26: 6, 7). And he goes on to declare that that hope had been fulfilled in measure in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the Promised One. Still more forcibly did Paul identify prophecy with Gospel in declaring that as an apostle he was “separated unto the gospel of God, [which he

had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures]" (Rom. 1: 1, 2). He also, in Gal. 3: 8, states most strikingly that "the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen [Gentiles] through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

We should not make a distinction of gospels, according to several descriptions: as, the "gospel of grace" (Acts 20: 24), the "gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 24: 14), and "the everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14: 6). For these are only different characteristics or aspects of one and the same Gospel,—the only Gospel (Gal. 1: 6-9). We must widen our conception of the Gospel to embrace all its aspects. We must recognize that the Gospel dates from eternity (1 Peter 1: 20); that the Gospel was on hand to catch man as soon as he fell (Gen. 3: 15); that the Gospel constituted the means of salvation in all the olden times, whether under the law or without it (Rom. 10: 12); that the Gospel is the message of salvation for every creature today (Mark 16: 15); that the Gospel will mightily prevail amidst the darkness of the tribulation (Rev. 7: 9, 14); that the Gospel will bring to us believers the vast remainder of our salvation in the glorifying of our bodies (1 Pet. 8: 5); that ultimately the Gospel will crown all redeemed and saved creation with the same glory and immortality (Rom. 8: 21). Much is lacking in personal appreciation, as well as in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel, if it is not identified with the full scope of divine promise as unfolded through the whole vast range of Biblical prophecy.

PROPHECY KEEPS SCRIPTURE FOCUSED UPON REDEMPTION.

Neither does the claim that predictive prophecy constitutes the organizing and unifying factor of the whole Bible displace the theme of redemption from its focal position in all the Scriptures; prophecy is just that which keeps all Scriptures focused upon redemption.

The promise of Gen. 3:15, which is the germ of all Biblical prophecy, is the initial promise of redemption for fallen man. Each advancing stage of prophecy brings that Redeemer in the perfect revelation of His work more nearly and clearly to view; each unfolding of the prophetic scheme expands and enriches our conception of redemption. The very ear-marks of all genuine prophecy are atonement for sin by the blood and power in the blood for deliverance from Satan. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46, 47).

We have now proved: that the whole Bible is an organic body; that predictive prophecy is its constructive factor; that the prophetic element springs out of the presence of Christ in the whole Bible; and that prophecy fills all Scripture with gospel proclamation and redemptive grace. It follows, therefore, that we are to approach the study of the Book of Revelation at the end of the Bible as the logical climax and conclusion of all Biblical prophecy.

CHAPTER II.

PRINCIPLES OF PROPHECY AND OF UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY.

IT IS well worth while at this point to stop to consider prophecy in its nature, its purpose and its value; and to get in hand clearly from the outset the true principles of a correct and conclusive understanding of all Biblical prophecy.

1. THE NATURE OF PROPHECY.

In the Biblical sense prophecy is communication from God to men by a messenger. Such communication has always been more commonly didactic or hortatory; i. e., given for immediate moral and spiritual effect. There has been very little need for having such communication handed down in writing for after generations. Consequently, very few prophets of olden time are represented in Biblical writings. Very few of them are known to Biblical pages even by name. It is not the words, but the deeds, of such great prophets as Elijah and Elisha that thrill our hearts.

But we are using the term prophecy as the revelation from God to men of things to be brought to pass in future time. This is predictive prophecy. Prophetic prediction is simply history revealed in advance by God to man. The possibility of such a thing lies in three facts.

First, God is the exclusive arbiter of all events. "The heavens do rule"; "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4: 26, 35); "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even

that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him" (Job 23:13, 14); "Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps. 115:3).

Secondly, as the arbiter and doer thereof, God foreknows all things. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). God never has to take after-thought. He never has to adapt Himself to an unforeseen situation and to undertake thereupon a freshly-decided course of action. Even so tragic, forbidding, hellish an occurrence as the crucifixion of Jesus was foreordained of God to transpire just when and as it did: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). Both God's arbitration and His foreordination of this tragedy are strikingly revealed by the application given to it, by the company of disciples at Jerusalem, of what God predicted in the second Psalm one thousand years before: "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said; Why did the heathen [Gentiles] rage, and the people [Jews] imagine vain things? the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:25-28).

Finally, God can with authority and certainty reveal to man what is to come to pass. He is able to reveal to man the secrets of futurity as clearly as the known facts of history. "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (not reached even yet after more than twenty-five hundred years).

"He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass." "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret" (Dan. 2: 22, 28, 29, 47). "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1: 21).

Predictive prophecy in its nature, then, is a lifting of the veil of secrecy from the divinely ordained future, so that all men can as plainly read that future as if it had already transpired.

A good illustration of these points is furnished by the prediction, fourteen years in advance, of the destruction of the host of Sennacherib which menaced Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (Isa. 14: 24-28): "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden" (as already stated, fourteen years beforehand).

2. THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY.

Strange as it may seem at first, the purpose of prophecy is not primarily to reveal the future, but to prove the exclusive deity of God. Because God is the sole arbiter of all that transpires, He only can reveal the same. None can rob Him of His secrets. "The secret things belong to God" (Deut. 29: 29). God may safely challenge all rivalry to His deity. He may stake His exclusive claim to deity upon His unique prerogative

of divulging long in advance the future which He fore-knows because He predetermines it. This challenge He most pointedly throws down to His rival divinities. It is in Isaiah especially that this argument for the sole deity of Jehovah, as against all the claims of heathen gods, is employed over and over.

“Produce your cause, saith the Lord: bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them: or declare us things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you. . . . For I beheld and there was no man: even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word. . . . I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: Before they spring forth I tell you of them, . . . I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. Assemble yourselves and come, draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near: yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me: a just God and a Saviour: there is none beside me. Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. . . . Remember the former things that are from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it.” (Isa. 41: 21-24, 28; 42: 8, 9; 45: 19-22; 46: 9-11.)

3. THE VALUE OF PROPHECY.

Here again we find that the value of prophecy does not consist primarily in its contribution of most im-

portant information. The value which God attaches to it is that it serves as a ground and confirmation of faith. And this at once impresses upon us the deep importance of earnest attention to and clear understanding of prophecy. It cannot be denied that great loss is being suffered today by the Church for the lack of deep interest in the vast stores of Biblical prophecy and of intelligent comprehension of them.

The following passages of Scripture explain this true value which God attributes to His word of prophecy.

“Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there is no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I am the Lord: and beside me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I am he: and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work and who shall let it? . . . Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and declared it? ye are my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God: I know not any. They that make a graven image are all of them vanity: and their delectable things shall not profit: and they are their own witnesses: they see not, nor know: that they may be ashamed, . . . I have declared the former things from the beginning: and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them: I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass: I have even from the beginning declared it unto thee: before it came to pass I showed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this: and will ye not declare it? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning: even before the day when thou heardest them not: lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew

them. Yea, thou heardest not: yea, thou knewest not: yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb." (Isa. 43: 8-13; 44: 8, 9; 48: 3-8.)

Jesus still more clearly and simply explains this value of prophecy in the interest of faith: "Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he" (John 13: 19).

4. THE WAY TO READ PROPHECY.

The expression "read" is used advisedly, for the Word of God is no doubt very often too elaborately "studied" and "expounded."

Simple, First-hand Reading.

The Bible strongly emphasizes the simplicity and childlikeness of mind which is essential to a ready and a true understanding. As all the Bible has in a true sense come down from heaven, we may justly suppose that its entire contents are very familiar there. But the elaborate outfit of "helps to the study of the Bible" all belongs to the earth. It would be ridiculous to propose importing it into heaven.

But, one will say, "Heaven needs no earthly light"; and, "Our heavenly state will need no earthly assistance." But do we not now have heavenly illumination offered to us? And are we not promised a present divinely quickened intelligence? Will not Jesus now open His disciples' understanding, and will He not now open the Scriptures to their understanding? Is there no privilege now like that of Mary of Bethany, of sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing His words? Without question, "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" are now to be "revealed unto us by His Spirit." And it may be real to us that "now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God: that we might know the things

which are freely given to us of God." In fine, right now the Scriptures are to be "spiritually discerned." All pains, then, should be taken to read the Word of God under the "unction from the Holy One" which maketh us to "know all things."

Scripture Self-Intelligible.

Furthermore, that we are to be wary of so-called "helps to the study of the Bible," is evident from the fact that those to whom the Scriptures first came did not have those "helps." And yet there is sufficient evidence that the communications from God as recorded in the Scriptures were fully intelligible to those who first received them. Is it not to be supposed that Paul's Epistle to the Romans was intelligible to the believers at Rome, although Paul—not to mention prominent names of our modern commentators on that profound epistle—was not present to explain it to them? Is it not the only reasonable assumption that Paul meant to make his meaning self-intelligible, under the Holy Spirit, whether to Roman saints or to us?

We have in the Bible some notable illustrations of true method in treating the Scriptures.

In Nehemiah's day they gathered "all that could hear with understanding," and read "from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand: and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law: . . . so they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:1-8). It is evident that all the help that Ezra and his fellow-readers gave was that only which served to make the Scriptures audible and self-evident in sense to the common people.

Reference has already been made to the way in which Jesus simply "opened . . . the Scriptures" to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: and to the way in

which, in the case of the Apostles, Jesus simply "opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." In both cases it is clearly implied that the Word itself is perfectly lucid without "helps," at least other than those which serve simply to open the sense to the understanding. This sense is the natural and evident sense, requiring no "interpretation," for this would imply that only certain ones can understand what all others must depend upon them for.

At Thessalonica, in the Synagogue of the Jews, Paul for "three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging." His whole aim was to cause them to see for themselves out of their own Scriptures, in their self-evident sense, that "this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ." It implies the self-interpreting character of all the Old Testament prophecies pointing to Jesus.

Of the Bereans, whom Paul next visited, we read: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Here we have the clearest evidence that everybody must be his own free and final judge as to the teaching of Scripture, if he would know what is so; that it is the inestimable prerogative of every one to have "opened . . . Scriptures" to his own "opened . . . understanding."

The Psalmist exclaims confidently, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). This is first-hand light for every Bible reader. No one should distrust his own Bible and borrow his understanding of it from some one else. Rather let one distrust all who would intrude upon the sanctity of this first-hand audience with God in all His Scriptures. Like the Bereans, we should listen with all readiness of mind to those who, in the providence of God, address us out of the Word; but we should also, like those Bereans,

hold ourselves absolutely free and responsible in deciding "whether these things [are] so."

It is not scholarly study, critical understanding, classical acumen—constituting an official class, superior to the lay masses, as their Scriptural authorities—that is favored by the Bible itself. The Scriptures were mostly addressed directly and finally to the "common people." And it were very short-sighted on God's part, if He honestly wanted to be easily intelligible to everybody, had He made the comprehension of His meaning dependent upon some outside "interpreter." It is not "light on the Bible," but light out of the Bible, that is alone needful. No professed "light on the Bible" is worthy of our acceptance, until we have light from the Word ourselves, so clear and certain, that in its light we are able to see light elsewhere, if it is there, and to detect its absence if it is not there. "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation" (Psa. 119:99).

Especially Must Prophecy Be Self-Intelligible.

It is especially true of prophecy, that it is independent of human "helps" for intelligibility. The contrary is generally assumed, and the contrary is the general practice. But, in the nature of the case, what has just been said must be true. No one claims that such human helps are needed in reading Bible narrative and history. But prophecy is simply history narrated by revelation ahead of its time. Theories of interpretation imply that prophecy does not plainly reveal, but that it conceals, coming events: that it does not unveil, but veils, the future. This denies the very nature of prophecy as we have found it set forth in Scripture. Even the heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar, recognized and acknowledged that Daniel's God was "a revealer of secrets." Even historical fulfillment of prophecy should never be termed "unveiling prophecy;" this is a most mischievous idea.

A veiled prophecy is a self-contradiction. So far from "History Unveiling Prophecy," the fulfillment of a prophecy depends upon that prophecy for its identification, and not *vice versa*. The only true and safe principle to observe in reading prophecy is that prophecy unveils history.

As prophecy deals with what can be known to God only, it must be made self-intelligible to all readers, or it is not revelation; and if it falls short of revelation, no man or angel can remedy the deficiency. The self-evident, the self-interpreting character of prophecy, is the arbiter of our method of receiving and expounding all prophecy. We are foolish if we take up with any construction of a given prophecy before it becomes self-evident to ourselves. And our sole aim in expounding a prophecy should be, not to maintain a theoretical "interpretation" of it, but to make its self-evident meaning plain to every hearer, so that he has not to learn it or put it down in a note-book, for he has come to see it right there in his own Bible. Expounder and hearer, then, simply read together; and they re-read; and they read under the only true light, that of the Bible, until they see eye to eye in one common self-evidencing, self-convincing meaning.

Prophecy to be Read in due Order.

Again, it is essential to read prophecy in the order of its unfolding down through the entire Bible. Prophecy should not be read backwards, presuming to begin with Revelation, for instance. One is not prepared to read Revelation until he has reached this terminal over the broad-gauge track running all the way from Genesis. Neither should prophecy be read disjointedly, but in its entire body. Most absurd "interpretations" will abound when fragmentary passages are taken out of their setting and perspective and are interpreted in fanciful ways. Again, a theoretical construction should not be placed

upon some detached passage or expression and made a "key" to mistaken "interpretation" of the whole lines of prophecy. A most notable instance of this is the theory of the 2520 years, deduced from the expression "seven times," in Leviticus 26. This fallacious theory is hindering clearness, fulness and unity of prophetic understanding among pre-millennial believers today more probably than any other one thing.

Neither is it safe to handle prophecy in any large degree on the topical plan. The passages that are grouped together may be made to tell a very different story from what they are intended to tell, or from what they will tell, when taken in their context and in their place in the whole body of prophecy.

Circumstantial Light on the Prophecies.

Another most important principle to be observed in reading prophecy, is that of reading each prophecy in the light of the occasion for its utterance. God does not project prophecy upon man's mind without occasion for doing so. It is from a present occasion that God lifts the veil of future outcome; for it is only by virtue of the present occasion that the unveiled outlook finds interest, meaning and importance to those who receive it. The words of Jesus, "When thou art converted," were of little weight to Peter so long as he was sure that, if all others failed his Master, he never would. But when he failed Him the worst of all, Christ's words became to him a prophecy of hope and salvation. Has the reader noticed that nearly every book of the Old Testament prophecy opens with explicit reference to contemporaneous history? Even when this is wanting, as in Obadiah and Habakkuk, it comes out soon in the body of the book what historic circumstances are being dealt with as the occasion for the prophecy. And, in the few instances where even this is wanting, it can be seen that definite and intelligible circumstances are being dealt with; only

that they are not contemporaneous with the days of the prophets themselves, but they belong to days of the distant future which the prophets are given to foresee. This is notably illustrated in Joel.

This very imperative principle of always reading the prophet's message in the light of the circumstances which afford the occasion for the message, will be largely illustrated further on when we take up the prophetic books severally. Suffice it here to say, that to ignore this principle of reading and comprehending prophecy, would be like a foreigner's reading and trying to comprehend the American Declaration of Independence without carefully mastering the historical occasion for that proclamation.

Summary.

Let us sum up the points of this chapter. Prophecy, while actually comprehending all divine communication through human agency,—embracing all real preaching even—yet in common usage relates especially to the divine disclosure by man's mouth of future things which God alone can predetermine, foretell and bring to pass. The purpose of prophecy is, therefore, to signalize the exclusive deity of our Lord; and the value of prophecy to us lies chiefly in its serving to establish faith in the Lord God. And the way to read prophecy is as a candid, intelligible revelation, to be received in the simplest and most natural manner, without dependence upon human "authority" or theories of "interpretation" as though God intended to conceal rather than to reveal; and the prophetic disclosures should be read in orderly progression and in the light of the circumstances which furnished occasions for the solutions of the future to be revealed.

Personal Testimony.

In closing this chapter on principles and methods, the writer so far presumes upon the sympathy of his readers

as to offer a word of personal testimony, explaining the peculiar character of the present work, as well as of his former volume on the Book of Daniel, and of the one on Jonah.

For above thirty-eight years the writer has obeyed what he felt to be the call of God's Spirit to read the Bible as a whole, at Jesus' feet, with exclusive dependence upon the simple, consecutive text, and in God-given confidence that in due season the entire body of revelation would become self-evident, self-consistent and conclusive. The two works just referred to, as also the present work, are the product, such as it is, of exclusively direct perusal of the Scriptures themselves in confidence of their self-evident meaning. The writings have been carefully planned to the end, not of teaching the reader, but of assisting him speedily to perceive for himself the self-evident revelations which it took the writer many years to come clearly and fully to perceive.

Besides, the writer seeks to encourage God's children to go to their own Bibles with childlike confidence; to read the Bible entire; to take it in simple, natural sense; and to search this exclusive authority for themselves as to whether this or that which is offered from outside is so. A larger blessing still will be following from this way. Instead of the present confusion of mind among earnest children of God,—this appalling and increasing prevalence of scism—the children of God will find “their hearts . . . comforted, being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding” (Col. 2:2). For, when the children of God—led by their ministers and teachers—shall come to the Bible as fellow-readers and searchers, taking it just as it reads straight down through and as one unified, unfolding revelation, they will, they must—if they have due patience with the Bible itself and with one another—come steadily and surely into the blessed place of seeing eye to eye in the Word of truth, of thinking the same things and of speak-

ing the same things. Thus only will the rapidly multiplying isms and scisms decrease and die out entirely.

The author makes occasional reference to translations other than our common King James, but this he does, not as a preference or special endorsement of other versions, or outside such current versions as are within easy reach of the commonest reader.

CHAPTER III.

THE THREEFOLD, CHRISTO-CENTRIC DIVISION OF THE BIBLE.

I. THE THREEFOLD DIVISION OF THE BIBLE.

A CURSORY examination of Biblical prophecy in regular course brings to light a remarkable threefold division of the Bible according to the prophetic standpoint of each part. The prophetic standpoints are successively, that of the race as a whole, that of Israel, and that of the Church. This variation of standpoint creates no difference in aim or ultimate focus; a consistent harmony and unity of aim is preserved throughout.

1. The portion of Scripture devoted to the redemptive perspective from the standpoint of the human race entire, while it covers more than half the time from creation to Christ's first advent, yet includes only an introductory section of the Bible; namely, the first eleven chapters of Genesis. The "Protevangelium"; i. e., the first Gospel-promise, given in Gen. 3:15; the prophetic ministry of Enoch; the covenant of God with Noah,—not to mention other possible references—all unveil the future in Christ for the race of mankind as a whole, without distinction of any special part thereof.

2. Beginning with the twelfth chapter of Genesis, the covenant of God is with Abraham and his seed. As already said, this is in entire harmony with the previous standpoint; for God's supreme purpose in calling Abraham was stated from the beginning to be this: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). All the further Old Testament Scriptures, unless Job be excepted, are organized and developed on the

basis of Hebrew prophecy, or of prediction concerning Israel as God's special channel for the continued pursuit of His original purpose for mankind. In all this great body of Scripture confusion only will result, if the reader evades the literal, self-evident, single sense, to inject "interpretation" from the standpoint of the Church.

This does not rob the Christian believer of anything precious in Old Testament Scripture. It really is the only way of preserving to him what is the best, because it is the true, sense; and it holds good for him that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The moral and spiritual uses of the Old Testament Scripture are the same for the Christian believer today that they were for the Hebrew believer of old, even as the latter was finding as his light and life the same Son of God—though not yet revealed in the flesh—that we do now since His incarnation. It is also true that the Hebrew Scriptures abound in good things intended for the Gentiles of that day, which things had to wait for the Church as the minister of them; but this was only because Israel failed in her calling. And the Church, too, has failed in fulfilling this calling; so that those good things for the Gentiles still wait for Israel to come again into her calling to minister them.

But that Hebrew Scripture is not to be read with the eye upon the Church is evident from the fact that the Church was unknown to the Hebrew prophets. Just as Israel was unknown to the previous ages, so was the Church unknown to the Hebrew age. The former fact does not mean that there was no Israel in a spiritual sense before Abraham; and the latter fact does not mean that there was no Church in the sense of Christ's spiritual body before the Day of Pentecost. That the

Church as such, however, is a new revelation, peculiar to this dispensation, is declared repeatedly in apostolical writings,—as when Paul, in Col. 1:26, describes the Church as “the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”

Even the four Gospels leave us standing at the Hebrew point of view prophetically. Indeed, at the very hour of Christ’s ascension, the Apostles were still inquiring, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom again to Israel?” And Jesus’ reply even then indicated nothing further than that they should be empowered by the Holy Ghost to be His witnesses in a world-wide circle radiating from Jerusalem.

3. When, therefore, the Church, as God’s new channel of testimony and ministry in the world, comes to be revealed, prophecy is found to shift its focus from Israel, and to center it upon the future of the Church. Hence the body of Scripture developed by this perspective of prediction embraces the whole of the New Testament Epistles and the Revelation; that is, it embraces all the apostolical writings.

II.

THE THREEFOLD DIVISION OF THE BIBLE CHRISTO-CENTRIC.

Already in chapter one we have seen that all Scripture is Christo-centric. Hence all Biblical prophecy must find its unity in Christ. Examination of the three divisions of the Bible already pointed out readily discovers to us that the focus common to them all is Christ. The real Pole Star of all Biblical prophecy is Christ in His coming in power and great glory, or the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. It is only in special aspects, or phases, corresponding to the three different human standpoints already outlined, that Christ’s glorious appearing is variously foreshown.

1. The first division of the Bible, Gen. 1-11, which

presents God's redemptive purpose from the standpoint of the undivided race, finds its focus in the coming of God's Son in power and great glory.

This is very definitely implied in the first redemptive promise (Gen. 3:15). But it is especially appropriate that God's primeval revelation of the earthly appearing of His Son should be crystallized by Enoch, who prophesied at about the middle of the antediluvian age. The epitome of Enoch's testimony is preserved for us in the New Testament by the Apostle Jude. It is very remarkable that this precious record, omitted from the Mosaic history, should have survived by tradition for thousands of years and then have been recorded in the apostolic division of the Bible. It shows what a mighty and lasting impression was made upon the race by this early testimony. Let the reader notice how very distinctly our Lord's* coming in heaven's authority and glory was thus foreshown in the very morning of human history.

"And Enoch also, the seventh [generation] from [including] Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince [convict] all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14, 15). The special phase in which this glorious revelation of Christ is presented is as the Lord of all, and as the Judge of all.

2. The second division of the Bible, embracing all the Old Testament beginning with Gen. 12, and also em-

*It is to be noted that, while "God" is the exclusive divine term employed in the account of creation (Gen. 1:1-2:3), yet thereafter it is the "Lord God" who frequents Eden as its superior administrator and who familiarly visits and fellowships the first pair. This is the Mediator, the Son of God, the Life and Light of the human creature. He it is that was promised as the seed of the woman—the second Adam—to redeem and deliver mankind. And His coming it is that Enoch predicted so plainly and faithfully; for which he so longed that he was even caught up without death so many centuries in advance to join that One until His coming.

bracing the four Gospels of the New Testament—all that great body of Scripture in which God's redemptive purpose is carried forward in prophecy and in history from the standpoint of the Hebrew people—gathers numberless brilliant prophetic revelations to a common center in the glorious appearing of Christ.

In the vast mass of Scripture, the passages which prove the position just taken are too numerous to cite, even one in a hundred. The period of history covered may well be divided prophetically into sections, with verification of the point in hand drawn from each section, as follows: The periods, consecutively, of Abraham, of Moses, of David, of the Prophetical Writers, of Christ Himself.

THE PERIOD OF ABRAHAM.

God called out Abram and revealed to him that a seed from his loins was to be the divinely chosen channel of blessing to all families of the earth: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him [Abraham]" (18:18). "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (26:4). The full value of this covenant to Abraham might be missed by us, did we not have certain New Testament comments upon the point. Jesus said to the disbelieving Jewish leaders: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). And Paul explains: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). How plainly these expressions show that the focus of the Abrahamic covenant consisted of the redemptive work of the Son of God in behalf of mankind! This work was, however, wrapt up in the succession of Abrahamic posterity and in the accomplishment of divine purpose with and for the literal national race springing from Abram's loins.

THE PERIOD OF MOSES.

While Moses was possibly the greatest of the prophets, as well as the greatest Scripture writer, yet his communications were not largely directly predictive. His was the ministry of legislation, placing the new nation under strong probation (as in the case of Adam in Eden), so that the future was left contingent upon the moral action of the nation. Nevertheless, there is an element of definite prediction in Moses' writings, the focus of which is found, as previously in the Bible, in Christ.

Especially definite and strong is the prediction of the rise of the Messiah as "a Prophet" like unto Moses himself. This likeness is very peculiar, and its peculiarity relates it the more impressively to Christ. (Deut. 18: 15-19.) "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.* And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, [approaching them 'full of grace and truth,' but without terrifying glory] and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." This is expressly explained in Acts 3: 19-26 as predicting the coming of Christ, first in His gloryless form, but also in His resurrection and in His reappearing in glory with all authority and judgment.

It is, however, in Deut. 33 that the coming of Christ in glory and all power is described by Moses. On the background of Sinaitic demonstration of His divine majesty

(vs. 1-5), Israel's King is in vs. 26-28 described as coming in like divine majesty for the deliverance and blessing of Israel, His Jeshurun.

THE PERIOD OF DAVID.

With David began predominantly the great body of prediction relating to the coming of Christ in all the kingly glory of heaven. A new definition to Christ's coming as the seed of the woman and the seed of Abraham is now given; it is His coming as the seed of David, God's chosen King of Israel. The moral beauty of David himself in God's eye, all the combination of sweet meekness and of lofty dignity, all the valor and victory, all the wealth and grandeur, which marked David and his illustrious reign,—his zeal for the honor and worship of Jehovah—form worthy types of "great David's greater Son" and of His coming kingdom of glory and power. Of course, it is in the collection of David's Psalms that this prospect is mainly found. For just one brief sample, we select Psalm 98.

"O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen [Gentiles]. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge [rule] the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people [Israel] with equity."

THE PERIOD OF PROPHETICAL WRITERS.

But it is with the Hebrew prophets who left writings—the noble procession from Isaiah to Malachi—that we

find ourselves standing in the meridian sunlight of the revelation of the Messiah in His coming, first as the Atoning Redeemer of Israel and also of the world, and then as the avenging Redeemer and the glorious King of the purified chosen nation, the One by whom the long-oppressed nation shall become the light and guide to all other peoples. We will later take up this body of prophecy more adequately; for the present we will limit ourselves to a very plain representation given in Zechariah 14, from which we quote a few verses:

“Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and the spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to the battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley..... and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with theeAnd the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.....And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain” (vs. 1-4, 5, 9, 16, 17).

THE PERIOD OF CHRIST HIMSELF.

Coming down to the Gospels of the New Testament, we find Messiah standing in the midst, Himself a Hebrew prophet, prophesying of Himself. Naturally, so long as He was revealing Himself to the Jews as the Son of God, their Messiah and King in humiliation, He did not point forward to His second coming. But after the die was cast, after the decision was irrevocably fixed in the

minds of the rulers not to acknowledge Him, then He opened His mouth plainly concerning His coming back with power and great glory.

At first He spoke of the matter only to His immediate disciples privately: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father with his angels" (Matt. 16:27). "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). But, on the occasion of His being condemned to death by the Jewish Council, He declared publicly: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64).

3. We now touch briefly upon the third division of the Bible;—namely, the apostolical Scriptures of the New Testament. These writings are of very different tenor from previous Scriptures. Law, types, Israel, even Christ as Messiah, barely find an echo now; and then only as giving way to a further dispensation, that of the Church, the body and bride of Christ, spiritually constituted out of all nations on no external basis, but only on the basis of faith.

Here are still found the most emphatic testimonies to Christ's second coming, His coming in glory and heavenly majesty. Only the point of view is changed to that which is peculiar to the Church. As oft as believers sit at the Lord's table, it is to "shew the Lord's death till he come." The believer is assured of his resurrection with them "that are Christ's at his coming." The coming of Christ is an incentive to give one's heart to Jesus: for "If any man love not the Lord Jesus let him be Anathema Maranatha" (i. e., the Lord Cometh) (1 Cor. 16:22). And the "crown of righteousness" awaits "all them.....that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

This coming is repeatedly described in language mark-

ing it with the same splendor and power which we have already everywhere found depicted. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16). "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (2 Thess. 1:7). "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:11-16).

PART II
Pre-Abrahamic Prophecy

CHAPTER I.

DISCUSSION OF THE CHRONOLOGY.

WE have already noticed that the first main stage of prophetic revelation in the Bible springs from the standpoint of the entire race, and that it finds its historical base in the dealings of God with mankind as a whole. That is to say, this primitive stage of prophecy lies prior to God's adopting the special seed of Abraham as the instrument of His purposes for the whole world.

The Biblical prophecy of pre-Abrahamic times is fundamentally important. While it is confined to the first eleven chapters of Genesis, yet it covers a vast period of human history. This period was nearly twenty centuries in length, according to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament from which our version descends; and it was more than thirty-three centuries in length according to what may be considered the more reliable chronology of the early chapters of the Bible.

We will at this point pause to discuss this important difference in chronology between the two main texts of the Old Testament, the Hebrew and the Septuagint.

There is a wide discrepancy in chronology between the Hebrew manuscripts, from which our translation of the Old Testament descends, and the Hebrew manuscripts, from which the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was made. In the case of the antediluvian patriarchs, the Septuagint postpones the birth of the given son of Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel and Enoch respectively, just one hundred years, and the birth of Lamech, the father of Noah, six years. This makes a total extension of 606 years from creation to the Flood, postponing the Flood

from 1656 A. M. to 2262 A. M. In similar manner, just one hundred years is added to the ages of Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Ren and Serug at the birth of their given sons, and fifty years to the age of Nahor at Terah's birth. This makes a total extension to post-diluvian antiquity of 650 years. Besides this, the Septuagint introduces after Arphaxad the name of Cainan, just as it is given in the genealogy of our Lord in Luke 3:36. Cainan's age at Salah's birth is given as 130 years, which is to be added, making a total extension in the chronology of the post-diluvian patriarchs of 780 years; or a grand total of 1386 years more of time between creation and Abraham than our English version gives us. This would make the date of Abraham's birth 3334 A. M., instead of 1948 A. M. The reader is invited to study the accompanying diagram (page 49).

In favor of the Septuagint chronology, it should be noted that it represents Hebrew manuscripts several hundred years earlier in date than the manuscripts from which our English translation descends. That is, the Septuagint was translated from Hebrew manuscripts from two to three hundred years before Christ, whereas our translation descends from Hebrew manuscripts dating about that much later than Christ. And other authorities which ante-date the manuscripts from which our translation descends exhibit the same disagreement with our translation and agree almost exactly with the Septuagint. We refer to the Samaritan Pentateuch, and to Josephus, the historian, who wrote just a little time after Christ. And the reliability of the Septuagint in general is strongly supported by the fact that Christ and the Apostles commonly took their Scripture quotations from it.

It has been noted that the manuscripts from which our version descends were made considerably subsequent to Christ. It is with good color maintained that, while Jewish copyists were generally very careful as well as

KING JAMES AND SEPTUAGINT CHRONOLOGIES OF GENESIS COMPARED

Name	King James			Septuagint		
	Birth	Death	Age	Birth	Death	Excess
Adam	A. M. 1	930	930	A. M. 1	930	....
Seth	130	1042	912	230	1142	100
Enos	235	1140	905	435	1340	100
Cainan	325	1235	910	625	1535	100
Mahalaleel ..	395	1200	895	795	1690	100
Jared	460	1422	962	960	1922	100
Enoch	622	987	365	1122	1487	....
Methusaleh ..	687	1656	969	1287	2256	100
Lamech	874	1651	777	1474	2251	....
Noah	1056	2006	950	1662	2612	6
Shem	1556	2158	602	2162	2764	....
Arphaxad ...	1658	2096	438	2264	2702	....
Cainan	See Luke 3: 36			2394	....	130
Salah	1693	2126	433	2529	2962	100
Eber	1723	2187	464	2659	3123	100
Peleg	1757	1996	239	2793	3032	100
Reu	1787	2026	239	2923	3162	100
Serug	1819	2049	230	3055	3285	100
Nahor	1849	1997	148	3185	3333	100
Terah	1878	2083	205	3264	3469	50
Abram	1948	2123	175	3334	3509	....
Isaac	2048	2228	180	3434	3614	....
Jacob	2108	2255	147	3494	3641	....
Joseph	2199	2309	110	3585	3695	....

The Excesses of the Septuagint Chronology are made up of the following extensions to the ages of certain fathers at the birth of the given sons; viz., Adam 100, Seth 100, Enos 100, Cainan 100, Mahalaleel 100, Enoch 100, Lamech 6 = 606 for the Antediluvian Age: Arphaxad 100, Salah 100, Eber 100, Peleg 100, Reu 100, Serug 100, Nahor 50 = 650 for the Postdiluvian Age: besides, the Septuagint adds the name of Cainan (see Luke 3: 36) born to Arphaxad at the age of 130, making a grand total of 1386 years.

strict in adhering to the manuscript in hand, nevertheless, in this case, they were guilty of actual and intentional alteration of the original text. The ground for this contention is, that the time of the appearance of Jesus so strikingly agreed with a long-standing tradition and expectation as to the time for the Messiah's advent, that disbelieving Jews wished to make it appear by the Scriptural chronology that Jesus arose far ahead of the time for Messiah to appear. And the manner in which the subtractions occur certainly wears a very suspicious look. The diagram of the chronology will at once present to the eye other suspicious features which need not here be explained.

The bearing of the whole matter is important to us in some respects. The extended reckoning of these superior sources affords sufficient antiquity to Creation, the Flood, and other epochs, to meet the demands of reliable chronology derived from Babylonian, Egyptian and other memorials. It also guards us against the assumption that the millennial age is to be the seventh thousand of years from Creation and, therefore, that it is surely nigh; for, according to this more probable chronology, we are already far along in the eighth millennium from Creation.

The pre-Abrahamic prophecy is germinal and primal to all subsequent prophecy. It should, therefore, be carefully studied. We may treat this initial section of prophecy after the chronological order following.

CHAPTER II.

THE EDENIC PERIOD.

WE have seen that the leading and unifying feature of the Bible as a whole is that it is a book of outlook, of foresight; it is, therefore, as a whole prophetic in character. And the outlook of Scripture is not a sentimental optimism; it is a divine disclosure of the future of man and of the world.

The very first chapter of Genesis faces futurity. Indeed, it may not be amiss to catch this forward look from the first verse of the Bible. It is probable that the total finished work of the original creation of our heaven and earth* is described in this verse, and that later verses

*It is an interesting and very important question how much of universal creation is included in Gen. 1:1. The question depends for its answer upon the meaning to be attached to the word "heaven."

A few minutes' use of a Concordance will show one that there is a plurality of heavens. Paul speaks of a "third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2). The expression "heaven of heavens" often occurs, indicating an empire or a republic of heavens. And there is even a vast organism of these empires in "heavens of heavens" (Psa. 148:4)—a League of celestial empires. Amos speaks of "stories in heaven," picturing to us a marvellous celestial structure of ascending heavens. And Christ is said in Eph. 4:10 to have "ascended up far above all heavens." Here an indefinite multitude of created heavens rising one above another is indicated; and yet it is stated that our Lord left them all very far beneath in His ascension. And in Heb. 9:24 He is said to have entered into "heaven itself,"—the uncreated heaven.

Now the definite expression, "the heaven," in Gen. 1:1, evidently confines attention to the earth's heaven, the lowest in position in relation to us, as also the only one familiar to us. The earth and its skies we find continually conjoined in Scriptural mention. And reason is soon found for this common conjunction. This reason is that heaven sustains such a vital relationship to the earth. This heaven embraces the atmospheric, the solar and the stellar belts. The two first chapters of Genesis already indicate what vital physical relations these skies sustain to the earth. But later Scriptures unfold to our wonderment the fact that the heavenly sphere surrounding this globe is a realm of spiritual presences holding most vital relations to earthly inhabitants and to human history. Satan is "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2); i. e., of the dominion holding sway in and from the skies; Satan is "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), and "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2); and believers are enlisted to "wrestle . . . against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [wicked spirits] in high [aky] places" (Eph. 6:12). On the other hand, the skies are well garrisoned with faithful and powerful angelic watchers "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14).

The fact seems to be that Satan is the spiritually fallen and re-

of the chapter are not a mere detailed recapitulation of the same. The condition described in verse 2 is not that of a yet unorganized creation, but that of a wrecked creation. Isa. 45:18 supports this view: "He created it [the earth] not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." Here is creation and formation,—the one original and the other secondary; the one producing something from nothing, the other fashioning something from preexisting material. Then the expression, "not in vain," denies an original chaotic condition of creation. Hence we may more reasonably ascribe Gen. 1:1 to primal creation, untimed, but surely perfect in order, which, on account of moral disorder,—perhaps consisting of Satan's first rebellion—was plunged by a judgment worse than that of the Deluge into chaos as described in verse 2. The further account, springing from the hope-inspiring word at the close of verse 2—"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—would then be descriptive of reformation rather than creation, the transforming of Chaos into the Cosmos of the modern earth. This whole history of the most remote past would carry outlook, or prophecy, in it; for it would show that God undertook original creation with an object in view, which object He was faithfully pursuing through the stages of Chaos and of Rejuvenation.

The story of the six days favors the explanation just given. There is nothing positively declarative of creation for the first four days. After verse 1 we first meet

bellious prince of this dual province of Christ's created universe. Most likely the chaos described in Gen. 1:2 was the result of Satan's revolt against the authority of the Son of God over all creation. The wicked spirits joined with Satan in this defection; and the object of this malign and infernal kingdom is to defeat and destroy the purpose of the Father concerning His Son as the creator and inheritor of this lower sphere. How soon Satan intruded and procured the defection of Christ's steward in the renovated earth! Now the attention of the whole Bible is kept focussed upon this earth and its skies; for the whole outlook and the whole drama of the Bible has to do with bringing to perfect consummation the original purpose of God in the creation of this sphere. And Gen. 1:1, like any well-ordered book, introduces at once the locality in which the whole drama is to be enacted; as much as to say, "To begin with, the heaven and earth, where is laid the scene of Biblical interest and operations, had their origin by creation of God."

again with the word "create" in verse 21. All the processes of the first four days may be taken as reappearances of survivors of the cataclysm denoted in verse 2. We may conceive, then, of only occasional new or additional creations during the process of rehabilitating the devastated earth. That at least vegetation in the renewed earth was from a survival of seeds in the earthy material receives strong color from 2:5: "And every plant of the field before it was in the earth [as a visible plant], and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground."

In passing, it may be noticed how completely evolutionism stands refuted by this story. Every creation in the vegetable and animal kingdom is said to have been "after their kind," the herbs "whose seed was in itself, after his kind," etc. See 1:12, 21, 24, 25. This shows that the various species of plants and animals were originally distinguished and fixed. Variations of species can truly be cited, whether occurring naturally or artificially; but they are not evolutions from one species to another. On the contrary, they are only perversions of original species produced by abnormal and deflecting conditions. Remove those diverting influences, and variations, instead of going on with further evolution (?), will seek to return to their original type. It is evident that at each stage of progress the Maker left a perfect typical and ideal product, upon which, after inspecting it Himself, He could give the verdict "that it was good"; everything was made for a purpose and a use, not for an aimless "evolution." That this is true is evident from the analogy of man, the crown of creation, who was originally made after a perfect type, neither as an evolution from something lower in order nor as having a higher evolution to reach.

This last statement will be more apparent upon noticing carefully what manner of being this man was by

creation. The record says that the triune God thus took counsel; "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). And the record adds (v. 27); "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Now the image of another is his impersonation, while his likeness is his visible representation. Are we to understand that Adam first impersonated and publicly represented God? Was not God Almighty from eternity impersonated and revealed in another; namely, His only begotten Son? Certainly! Christ, the eternal Son of God, is spoken of in Heb. 1:3 as "being the brightness of his glory, and the express *image of his person*." Again, in Col. 1:15 Christ is declared to be "the image of the invisible God." Notice, that it does not read: "Let us make man as our image, and as our likeness," but "in our image, and after our likeness." The simple, obvious sense is, then, that man should be created in Christ, the eternal image of God, and fashioned after Christ, the eternal likeness, or visible representation, of God. He was the original, Adam was only the copy.

It is a revelation of fundamental importance, that the human head of the race was created perfect in Christ, the Son of God. This relates to his inner personality. But this personality—created in moral, mental and spiritual being in Christ, God's Son—was given a visible form. "And the Lord God formed man" (Gen. 2:7). (It is very noteworthy that the divine designation passes in Chapter 2 from the trinitarian cognomen, "God," of Chapter 1, to the distinctive personal designation of Christ, God's Son, as "the Lord God." Reading Chapters 2 and 3 right through with the understanding that the Lord God is Christ, wonderfully illuminates the whole story and starts us aright in the footsteps of Christ all through the Old Testament. He "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became [man as

created out of nothing came to be by this formation out of dust] a living soul." (Of course this does not designate man as an immortal spirit. That is involved in his creation.)

Thus man became the picture in clay of Christ as the likeness of God. "What," it will be asked, "do you mean to imply that Christ, God's Son, not only eternally impersonated the Father in essential, invisible being, but that He also, while yet unincarnate, visibly manifested the Father; and that Adam was molded in a body of clay after that visible form of the Son of God?" Certainly! The angels evidently have always been privileged to behold the face of God in the Son. And, from time to time,—how many times we do not dream—the Son of God disclosed His eternal, visible form to human gaze. For example, Christ appeared bodily to Abram (Gen. 18), to Isaiah (Isa. 6, John 12:41), and to Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:26-28). And it was always "as the appearance of a man." Hence, by incarnation the Son of God simply assumed physically the form and appearance which He had immaterially borne from eternity. And He made Adam for Himself to dwell in invisibly and to walk in visibly to earthly eyes. This truth needs to be perceived clearly and impressively at the threshold of human history, or we largely grope in the dark all the way. Now God created man for a career, for a future; and He at once qualified him for that career. Christ created man to be the ruling proprietor of the creature-world, His own personal representative and vice-regent in that realm. He qualified him by his creation, and He commissioned him at once, to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." All this faced a future and was in a sense prophetic. Even the prohibition, under which Christ placed His steward, faced the

future, albeit with anxious scrutiny,—interrogatively, rather than actually prophetically.

Man was endowed with the highest order of intelligence and ability that was necessary in order to administer the world according to Christ's mind and purpose. When Adam named all animals aright by intuitive perception of God's thought and purpose in their creation, it showed that in his original state man gained knowledge by intuition and not by learning.

But there was contingency involved, owing to the uncertainty of free moral action. God could have predicted, He could have disclosed the future in literal prophecy, even from the very first; but it would have been untimely. So He left man intelligently and deliberately, as well as freely, to determine the future. So far as we know, the first pair may have filled up a whole century in that wonderful estate, or even two centuries if we follow the Septuagint chronology. On what marvellous elixir of life—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—must they have subsisted! What companionship with each other must they have enjoyed, such as none of their descendants have ever known! No books, or schools, or foregoing experience were needed by them to acquaint them with all true science,—meaning thereby the knowing of God and of His thoughts and ways in all His works. And what seasons of conference and of revelation they enjoyed, as the "Lord God"—the Son of God, the eternal Word of God, the always-Mediator between man and God—granted them in a special way "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day"!

A special word may appropriately be given at this point concerning the recognition of Christ in all our Old Testament reading, as has been exemplified in the last few paragraphs.

While the monotheism of the Old Testament is to be steadfastly maintained in antithesis to the prevalent

polytheism of contemporaneous heathendom, yet also is the distinct trinitarianism of the Old Testament to be just as loyally upheld against a virtual unitarianism that is now commonly ascribed to the Old Testament, at least so far as regards clear revelation. We need to recognize that in the Old Testament God came to man, dealt with man, communicated with man, only through the Son, our very Christ; also that souls had appropriate access to communion with God then, but only through the one, ever-living Mediator, the Son of God, our very Christ and Saviour. Hence, the divine being occupying this intermediate position throughout the Old Testament is always the Son, our Christ. And it is only as we thus read the Old Testament in Christ, and identify Christ in our reading, that these Scriptures become truly unveiled to us. "They [Old Testament Scriptures] are they which testify of me," said Jesus. And He did not mean that they spoke of Him only predictively, or primarily so. The Messianic prophecy, which is the Pole-star of Old Testament prophecy and the constructive factor of the whole Old Testament as a literary body, only meant the promise and prospect of the visible appearing in human flesh of the ever-present, well-known invisible Messiah, Anointed One, or Christ. He did not need to be made known first in the days of Jesus, but He did need to be recognized and acknowledged in Jesus, His incarnate self-manifestation. How could He have been recognized and identified visibly had He not already been known invisibly? And, *vice versa*, how can we ever truly appreciate the very Christ and Son of God in Jesus, if we are yet blind to His self-revelation as such, though invisibly, throughout the Old Testament?

CHAPTER III.

THE ADAMIC PERIOD.

THERE came the fatal day when the human companion of God's very bosom acquired a knowledge and a consciousness that made him a self-convicted, stark naked fugitive from "fellowship divine." Alas, man blasted all the prospects of his high estate, and he found himself facing a future of endless self-banishment "from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." Communion with Jehovah must be unembarrassed to be communion at all. Such communion had apparently fled forever from the human kind.

As we have seen, man was created in Christ the Son of God. His subsistence from Him must be maintained by partaking, in loving obedience of faith, of every word out of His mouth. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). But the first pair were enticed by the "old serpent" to receive into their hearts the representations of the deceiver in place of the word of "the Lord God." They thereby fell out of Christ as spiritual head, into Satan as the second and wicked father of their souls. How pathetic that divine lament in Gen. 3:22: "And the Lord God [Christ] said, Behold, the man is become as [though he were] one of us, to know good and evil." Henceforth for Adam and Eve, and for every individual of their posterity, the requisite for spiritual life again was to be "born again," or *created anew* in Christ the Son of God.

This mysterious, deadly genesis of sin in a pure soul is clearly explained—whether for Eve or Adam, or for a re-purified saint of today—in Jas, 1:14, 15: "Every

man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The genesis of sin in a pure soul is after the likeness of a bastard conception in the womb of a hitherto pure woman; it is by the deceived one's yielding otherwise lawful "lust" (desire) to proffered impregnation with the impure seed of an unlawful coition. The only lawful and pure seed of procreation for a heart that is God's is God's Word, the commandment of the Lord. But Satan solicits a hearing, he presents his seductions; and when a soul—whether in original, unfallen condition, or subsequently to being made "whiter than snow"—lends consent to Satan's solicitations, then "lust hath conceived" by Satan, and "it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished [in act] bringeth forth death."

With man's fall, the Scripture at once begins plainly to unfold the future for man and the world. The germ of all direct Biblical prophecy lies in the pregnant words spoken by Christ to the seemingly successful tempter: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

What did this mean for unhappy man, for the individual, for the race? It meant that as loss had come by man, so by man was recovery to come; that as alienation from God had overtaken disobedient man, so reconciliation was restored to him through the obedience of another man; that dominion in the earth, so foolishly lost to "that old serpent," was conserved in One who should appear as the seed of the very woman whom the tempter beguiled; in fine, that the victory of Satan was forthwith turned to his ruin, and that Paradise lost was regained in a Paradise that could never be lost.

There is futurity here, but it is without contingency. Faith in this promise at once found "The substance of

things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is the power of divine prediction: that it puts present absolute certainty and possession for us into the predicted event of the future. To man, things are actual only as they exist already as fact; with God things yet future from the standpoint of time are actual. By prophecy God discloses to man things that are actualized, though not in man's present, but in his future. Faith, however, embraces the end of the promise and takes immediate possession. Faith at once made Abram Abraham—"father of a multitude"—before the first individual of his posterity came to sight. Faith! "The want of sight she well supplies"; she "views the vict'ry from afar and brings that vict'ry nigh."

Much may justly be read between the lines in the record before us. Evidently, not only was the germ of all the Gospel given to Adam in Gen. 3:15, but we have full reason to suppose that the Son of God revealed to Adam fully "the things concerning himself" as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The new clothing given by Him to Adam speaks volumes. It meant substitutionary death of the innocent for the guilty, the shedding of blood for suitable clothing for one naked through sin. It implies restoration of soul and body through innocent life forfeited unto God in the place of the guilty. It was a type of the character and the work in which that "seed of the woman" should eventually appear. But more than that, it was a symbol or sign of the sacrificial provision already awaiting man at his fall; for the very "Lord God" who came on that dark day of the first sin to seek and to save the lost ones, appointed the slain animals as the visible representatives of Himself in His eternal sacrificial character and office.

Adam found atonement, or reconciliation, already in force and available to him in "the Lord God"; i. e., in the Son of God, then and from eternity the Mediator

between God and man. Under His instruction Adam—as Abel later—presented vicariously the blood of the “Lamb of God,” and he found rest in God through Christ and the “life hid with Christ in God.” True, there was also the pointing forward to the visible Calvary through the animal type. But Calvary was already invisibly there; and the sacrifice of Calvary’s Lamb was as actual and efficacious to Adam—and to all believers of old—in prophetic prospect as it came to be later in historic event, as it now is in historic retrospect. The fact of the case is that the cross of Calvary stands so related to all ages that the sacrifice of Jesus “once for all” was in full force and saving effect from the very fall of man.

This corrects some wrong notions, such as these: That believers of the old dispensation waited long, and perhaps are waiting still, for their salvation,—for pardon, for purity, for the Holy Ghost, and for communion with God; that there was no Gospel until the Gospel dispensation; that the Church as the mystical body of Christ did not pertain to the dispensations before the incarnation of the Son of God; and that believers of old did not become, and will not be, members of the glorified Church and body of Jesus Christ.

There seems probably to be an important prophetic element in Gen. 3:22-24, if only we make a perfectly allowable change in punctuation, as the sense seems clearly to demand. The suggestion is offered that the statement of verse 22 should be punctuated so as to read: “Behold, the man, is become [come], as one of us [heretofore], to know good and evil.” The expression “as one of us” had been true of man by creation, but was no longer true since his fall. Satan’s plea, “Ye shall become as gods, knowing good and evil,” was an inducement to Eve to become initiated into the unlawful knowledge of the order of divinities which he represented and governed. God does not and cannot

know evil. It is said of our Saviour that "He knew no sin." The knowledge of sin implies and necessitates the experience of it. This God never had and never will have. And it grieved Him that Adam, who had been as one of the blessed eternal family of God, the Godhead,—because created in Christ who is the divine image and likeness—should break this unity and fellowship by initiation into forbidden satanic experience of evil.

Christ, therefore, in wisdom and mercy cut man off from the tree which symbolized man's bodily immortality in Him, and left the sentence of death resting upon the body; as Paul expresses it in Rom. 8:10: "The body is dead [mortal] because of sin." But, while man's access to "the tree of life"—bodily deathlessness—was barred, yet the expression "keep [guard, as Lesser translates it] the way of the tree of life," seems to imply the reservation of liberty of free access again for some future time. And, behold! "the tree of life" reappears prominently in the Book of Revelation. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). "And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life" (Rev. 22:2).

Meager as is the prophetic material belonging to the Adamic period, yet it will at once be recognized how fundamental in importance that little is, inasmuch as it takes firm hold upon that far distant—not yet reached—accomplishment of the Redeemer's restoration to man of all that was anticipated in the Edenic outlook and lost by the fall of man.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENOCHIC PERIOD.

FOR convenience we will begin this period with the first sons of Adam and gather up the successive links of the prophetic progress.

The earnest-hearted words of Eve upon the birth of Cain, her first-born—"I have gotten a man from the Lord" (Gen. 4:1)—may be reasonably taken to imply that she considered that the promised "Seed," the victor and Deliverer promised in 3:15, had appeared.

In this she was sadly disappointed. The second son proved to be the man after God's heart, and upon him Eve centered her hopes. These hopes were most rudely dashed to the ground by fratricide,—the first murder, the first martyrdom. It was a time for faith's grasp to reach out into the unseen and supernatural. Eve was rendered equal to this, as is made evident by her words upon the birth of Seth, whom she so named by faith: "For God," said she, "hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew" (4:25). Abel and Seth together typify Christ cruelly slain but raised again.

By the brief story of Cain and Abel we have great light shed upon our minds with respect to "Fundamentals."

1. We are not to conceive of the two brothers as mere youths, of little intelligence and of slight moral responsibility. As offspring of the first pair—fallen, indeed, but still capable of wondrously endowing by birth, and of clearly informing, from recent large experience, as to the way of losing life divine by disobedience, and as to the way of receiving anew the life "hid with Christ in God"—they had endowments, and moral and

spiritual privileges, not enjoyed by any since then. Consequently, their presentation of sacrifices was evidently a declaration of mature decision from fully intelligent and responsible men. No doubt the whole scheme of sacrifices, both as to form and as to significance, was perfectly familiar to the first family group. It was by faith that Abel offered of his flock, and not merely because he was in the sheep business. And it was in the disobedience of unbelief that Cain brought only the products of the ground.

It is not unlikely that Cain prided himself upon these products. Not improbable is it that he began thus early the art of developing from plants which God caused to spring up as a part of the curse (3:18) those articles of tempting food, of charming flower, of attractive scent,—yea, and of medicine—which are so commonly found today in foods, drinks, perfumes and medicines. God's appointment of the original herbs, fruits and nuts for food was reaffirmed after man's fall (3:18), and this regimen was exclusive of the thorns and thistles, as well as of skillfully developed offspring from them. All this furnishes ground for the opinion that quite a revolution in dietary would be involved in cleansing from the use of God's children all articles whose pedigree is traceable to the accursed part of the plant kingdom.

It was in humble, loving, penitent and thankful faith in his living though yet invisible Redeemer, that Abel presented his sin offering, his burnt offering, his peace and his meat offerings. But it was in proud, impenitent, self-loving and thankless wilfulness that Cain assayed to command divine approval of his meaningless, valueless gifts. No element of redemption, no sign of the Mediator was represented in the latter; it was a bloodless offering, pointing manward and earthward instead of Christward and heavenward, even if we suppose that the materials offered were those appointed to be added to the blood offerings. It was a denial of Christ and a

refusal of penitence, faith and consecration, as well as of the true way of access to, of acceptance and communion with, God. While he refused not to acknowledge God, yet he did so only on the unitarian basis, on the ground of sufficiency without an atoning Mediator and an enabling Paraclete.

And way back there began the historic division of mankind as a worshipping race into two radically distinct and opposite classes,—the evangelical and the rationalistic; the penitent and the impenitent; the believing and the self-justifying; the trinitarian and the unitarian; the truly Christian and the (really) anti-christian; the class which has the witness of God to sonship through regeneration, and the class which testifies to itself as natural-born children of God while really being still “of that wicked one”; the class which loves his brother, and that which persecutes his spiritual brother,—has the spirit of Cain, the murderer, in him; the class which since that day has been forming “the whole family [of God] in heaven and earth,”—making up the “holy temple in the Lord,” the “habitation of God through the Spirit,” the “Father’s house,” the “city of God”—and that class which since then has been constituting “the assembly of the ungodly, the congregation of evil doers.”

Also way back there began the opposite relationships to be sustained by these two classes to the material things of life until the promised One should reign. “Cain went out from the presence of the Lord [Christ], and dwelt in the land of Nod,” etc., (4: 16). He was well content, so long as he was immune from the death penalty and free to find his portion in earthly things. He founded a family and “builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son.” He was the founder of organized, citified social life, centered in man and making him famous. He was the father of purely earthly, self-elaborating civilization. His progeny

quickly developed the resources, the utilities, the arts and the aesthetic accomplishments of civilization. It is no picture of tedious evolution from barbaric degree, but of immediate, intuitive development of the best standards of godless civilization. Along with this, the pre-ordained safeguards of true domestic and social order were supplanted; and so human life, from center to circumference, was organized after man's own conception and pleasure.

To this order the historic Cain-class belongs; it is their portion; they immerse themselves in it, and they only wish that it could be their portion forever,—they would be contented if it were. But to this order the Abel-class—God's children—have always needed to be strangers, aliens; they need to shun and flee it as a dangerous vortex, to "sit loose" from it, lest they be swallowed up in it to their spiritual destruction. While "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is," yet only "godliness with contentment is great gain." We came empty-handed and shall soon leave empty-handed; having food and raiment God's children are to be therewith content; and such are the "temptation and . . . snare, and . . . many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown man in destruction and perdition," attending the earthly pursuits of worldlings, that the Apostle Paul urges most earnestly, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things."

Eve exhibited discernment of these things and the solicitude of faith when she named her next-born "Seth,"—"Appointed, or Put"—explaining, "For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Whether she hoped that Seth would be the promised One or not, she certainly fixed her hope and prayer upon a son who should be a type, progenitor and channel of His coming. And she was not disappointed. So true was Seth to "the faith once [for all] delivered to the saints," that in the days of his son Enos distinc-

tion between Cainites and Sethites became so clear-cut spiritually, that believing men commenced to "call upon," or "to call themselves by," "the name of the Lord";—i. e., to stand boldly before the world as Jehovians, just as "disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." It was demonstrated that the faith persisted in this hostile, Satan-ruled world by divine and supernatural care, and that believers had a power over all the power of the enemy.

And this old story shows that evolution breaks down with reference to spiritual origins and progress as well as to every other kind. That faith, communion and "dispensational light" were not accidental conceptions, of later elementary and evolutionary beginning, but the characteristic—at first-class standard—of twice-born men of those early days, is manifest from that spiritual star of first magnitude whose name, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam," gives us the title to the present chapter.

While the place occupied by Enoch in the prophetic unfolding of the Bible has already been presented, and his message in that distant day has been expounded at some length, yet now we see this prominent figure against a much fuller background. We feel much more strongly the force and significance of his life and of his message. At a point nearly seven hundred years down the stream of human history (or nearly thirteen hundred, according to the preferred chronology of the Septuagint), this noble prophetic figure stands out in bold relief.

In the regular narrative, it is the absolute, unbroken fellowship of Enoch with God—from comparatively early manhood and for three hundred years thereafter—that is held up to view as the suitable setting for his sudden, deathless rapture to be with Christ,—that promised One not yet revealed to the world. If we ask concerning the preparation for, and the manner of, the impending rapture of the saints, there we have it

all illustrated and explained in two lines: "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (5:24). Equally simple and lucid is the record of Heb. 11:5, 6: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death: and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him." It seems strained and misleading to read from this that there is a special "translation faith" to be acquired as the condition of translation. The two passages show that Enoch's fitness for translation consisted in no special faith relating to his physical change, but only in that "like precious faith" of all believers in all ages and all times, which admits Christ into human lives as "the light of the world," which light in believers really belongs up there in Christ rather than down here.

Enoch's life was thus a sign in the earth of Christ in the hidden glory; and his translation was the rehearsal of "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him." This alone has made Enoch to be of inestimable value to believers for all these millenniums.

We are not to take Enoch as an illustration of evolution in godly life and in prophetic revelation. He was no doubt a top-line example of the original faith, experience and prophetic light of his forefathers. But the record of his prophetic career given us in Jude, shows that the ungodliness of the Cainites had reached such a stage of evolution as to call especially for the warning of the coming of the promised One, and for the emphasis of the warning by such a Christly life as Enoch lived and by such a significant disappearance from earthly view as was his. "Enoch . . . prophesied of these." It does not say that he prophesied to these. He did press his message upon these Cainites, "evil men and seducers" which had been waxing "worse and worse." But he saw in them ensamples of like kind in

all succeeding days, even of such as Jude describes as "ungodly men," "filthy dreamers," "spots in your feasts of charity," "twice dead" trees of withered fruit, "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

And this was Enoch's message concerning all such of whatever day: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14, 15).

Three cardinal features of our Lord's earthly appearing are made prominent in this prediction:

1. He is to return personally to the earth while its peoples shall be engaged in ungodly deeds and defiant words against Him.

2. He will come attended by myriads of holy ones from celestial heights.

3. His coming will be for the correction of the rebellious race by judgment and righteousness.

This prophecy out of the most distant antediluvian times is most wholesome, as showing that the long-suffering of God is waiting,—not for the evolution of peace, liberty and equality on earth through "Christian democracy" (!)—but for the time of the visitation of judgment upon "the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction"; the time when "the Lord [Jesus] at thy right hand [now as Intercessor shall come and] shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen [Gentile nations], he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound the heads [kings and rulers] over many countries" (Psa. 110: 5, 6). Other passages read: "Till his enemies be made his footstool," and "until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which [Jesus] is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6: 14, 15).

CHAPTER V.

THE NOACHIAN PERIOD.

NOAH occupies a unique place in human history and in the prophetic perspective.

He was a great-grandson of Enoch, of the tenth generation of the race, and the connecting link between the antediluvian and the postdiluvian worlds.

Prophetic hope—probably of his being the promised One—was expressed in the name given him; for Noah means “rest,” or “comfort.” Lamech so named him for the assigned reason, “this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed” (5:29).

This would indicate that the toil required in tilling the accursed ground had become a crushing weight. We are reminded of Moses’ words in Psa. 90:10: “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow.” How much more labor and sorrow did bodily strength mean when human life reached nearly a full thousand years!

This springs upon us a line of important, and even startling, reflection with reference to the antediluvians.

What did it mean for human life to span almost a millennium,—one-sixth of all time from creation till today? The wearisomeness of a life of toil has already been suggested to our minds. What about the rapidity of race-multiplication under such longevity? And what about the accumulation of experimental knowledge, if one’s years of intelligence spanned a period as long as from the middle of the “Dark Ages” of our dispensation to the present day of scientific light and inventive achievement? Think of an Edison living on yet in full

vigor for eight or nine hundred years of historic opportunity and of inventive development! What might come to be the wealth of a multi-millionaire, seeing that a modern octogenarian has advanced from poverty to the possession of billions?

What stores of valuable historical knowledge and of revelation were available to Noah, whose father was contemporary with the aged Adam for over half a century, and who was himself contemporary with every generation but those of Adam and Seth, if we follow the Hebrew chronology; and with all but the first four and Enoch, if we follow the Septuagint chronology? In other words, consider what it meant for Noah to be for six hundred years a contemporary of Methuselah, who was for two and a half centuries a contemporary of Adam. Even adopting the Septuagint chronology, Noah was twenty-eight years old when Mahalaleel died, who was contemporary with Adam for one hundred and thirty-five years. Thus, even by oral tradition at closest hand Noah was able to carry through the flood the entire contents of the invaluable information of the whole antediluvian age of 1656 (Hebrew), or of 2262 years (Septuagint).

Again, what would be the possibilities of spiritual growth, in knowing and walking with God for eight or nine centuries, besides having from beginning to end the fellowship of others of like protracted experience? This reflection helps us to gather a fuller appreciation of the godly character of Noah as succinctly portrayed in the few words, "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (6:9). We have already seen illustrated in Enoch what it means that "Noah walked with God." A "just man" means a man of righteousness. And in Ezek. 14:14, 20 Noah heads the list of three elect ones out of thirty-four centuries (Hebrew) who are accredited for superior righteousness.

A little scrutiny will render very impressive the testimony that Noah was "perfect in his generations." He was perfect before the eight generations of his forebears—from Enos, Adam's grandson, down—who lived to know him. They no doubt hovered over the infant in sympathy with the father's prediction of comfort for the world through him. For five hundred years of the rapidly decaying antediluvian world, Noah must have lived a life of marked spiritual separation, as it appears that he obtained no sons for all that time. He may have lived a celibate life until after the Lord apprised him of the coming flood and bade him build an ark "to the saving of his house." For, if he was one hundred and twenty years building the ark, he began twenty years before the only sons ascribed to him—Shem, Ham and Japheth—were born. This gives force to Heb. 11: 7: "*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.*"

Among the things "not seen as yet" that Noah had to take "by faith," was "a house" to be saved by the ark he was commanded to build. It seems quite probable that for nearly five hundred years Noah had "walked with God" in celibacy. Believing men—"the sons of God"—had already yielded to the charms of the dashing, seductive "daughters of men," and, "seeing that they were fair,"—charming and attractive to the flesh, in comparison with the modest and retiring daughters of God—"took them wives of all which they chose" (Gen. 6:2). This was an awful and daring compromise with a deeply corrupted world. Marvellous was the result in favor of a physically eugenic and mentally distinguished stock; but it appallingly accelerated the moral and spiritual downgrade of the race. It was a fatal *Inter-Family World Movement*. Noah's life for nearly five hundred years had been a protest against his times, and he had kept himself from contracting pre-

vailing contamination and from possibly adding thereto by heading a family conformed to the times. But now, with the age just upon the brink of its precipice, and at so advanced a stage of life, to obtain out of this corrupted society a wife and amidst this society to build "a house"—a house that should with him meet the conditions of constituting the "holy seed" of a new humanity in a new world—that called for faith. But "by faith" Noah became the head of a wholly believing family in those awful days, a family fit to be saved and to be made the nucleus of a new race.

Further, Noah's life extended three and a half centuries into post-diluvian time. If we follow the Hebrew chronology, this stretches Noah's life over into the eleventh generation, and runs his life-time more than a half-century into the years of Abraham. (This strikingly illustrates the improbability of the Hebrew chronology). Even according to the Septuagint, Noah's life overlapped four generations of the post-diluvian race. Whichever time reckoning be taken, Noah's record stands good, "perfect in his generations"; and we are profoundly impressed with this testimonial to him as being for his day preëminently the "heir of righteousness which is by faith." Neither "the righteousness which is of faith," nor becoming "heir of the world," began first with Abraham; Noah preceded him in the line. And the line was of earlier origin than Noah. And that line is still taking in appropriate members; for, "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3: 29).

But the human longevity of that age of the world—which meant so much for a career of righteousness—meant also just as much for the rise of prodigies of ungodliness. It is the law of "evil men and seducers" to "wax worse and worse." A moment's reflection will impress one with the check upon the vaulting progress of wickedness which the present brevity of life main-

tains. Let the life of one sold out to Satan and to evil be prolonged tenfold; let the period of actual activity in the devil's service be extended nearer twenty-fold; let the activity be spurred on and augmented in inventiveness and efficiency by the association and coöperation of many others several centuries old in vice and crime; and one has a startling conception of possibilities of public and private evil—rapid in growth, mammoth in proportions—such as present conditions of a relatively puny, infantile race of men render impossible.

The sacred record, in a few brief delineations, opens to our view the monstrous wickedness of the Noachian world. During the thousand years of Methusaleh's life, which reached to the Flood, the current of Cainite iniquity—which in the fifth and sixth generations from Cain had become reckless of divine restraint—swept on like a mighty, swelling, overwhelming torrent, not only gathering under its destructive control the unbelieving generally, but even engulfing also the "sons of God," until Noah alone was left, standing like a pyramid on the plain, with an example of faith "by which he condemned the world."^{*}

^{*}*The Probation of the Antediluvian World.* A most striking light is thrown upon the dealing of the Lord Christ with the antediluvian age by a New Testament passage found in 1 Peter 3:18-22. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, *being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.*" Taken by itself the italicised portion of this verse would not be thought to mean anything else but the death and resurrection of Christ. "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Here one may stumble into thinking the previous statement meant, not Christ's resurrection in the body by the Spirit, but some special quickening of His disembodied being by the Spirit, by which quickening He went and preached among the departed spirits in their imprisonment. "Which [spirits in prison] sometime [aforetime] were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." This shows that the preaching of Christ spoken of was that to the generation of increasingly obdurate antediluvians, who were hardening themselves against the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit through the preaching and example of Noah—that "preacher of righteousness"—during those one hundred and twenty years while he was building the ark. That special epoch was thus opened: "And the Lord [Christ] said, My Spirit shall not *always* strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days [of special and urgent probation] shall be an hundred and twenty years."

The class of believers—"the sons of God"—who, in the days of Seth's son Enos, bravely "called themselves by the name of the Lord"; i. e., Jehovahites, the ancient name for Christians—had come to contrast the false beauty, the physical seductiveness, the vivacity, the polish, the educated charms of the "daughters of men" with the plain, modest, untutored, believing maidens, and they broke through the separating line,—scarcely recognized in the present day—"and they took them wives of all which they chose" (6:2).

Already were there "giants in the earth,"—giants in body, giants in intellect, giants in power and prowess, giants in sin and crime; but "after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Turning the well-preserved attributes of the godly class into the vital channels of the ungodly greatly reinforced the natural vigor and virtues of the latter. But the apostasy from the faith which this course involved only "speeded up" the forces of evil which were hurtling the race to its cataclysm of judgment. "The earth . . . was corrupt

The special probationary character of this era is emphasized by Heb. 11:7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which [act] *he condemned the world*, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." The fact is, then, impressed upon us by Peter that Christ "went and preached" to Noah's contemporaries in their last days by the same quickening power of the Holy Spirit by which He Himself was later raised from the dead.

But why should Peter connect the resurrection of Christ from the dead by the power of the Spirit with the generation that perished in the flood? "The ark . . . wherein few, that is, eight, souls were saved by water," or "through water"; that is, were carried safely on the flood itself. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This teaches that salvation is made good to us through the resurrection of Christ by the quickening of the Spirit. Of this water baptism is the "figure," the objective of baptism being, not the going as dead into the water, but the coming alive out of the water. Now Peter discloses to us that the ark bearing its occupants safely upon the waters of the Flood was "the like figure" of salvation by a risen and living Redeemer, who as the Lamb of God, "slain from the foundation of the world," was then as now taking "away the sin of the world." Thankful may we well be for this further light upon the full probationary and evangelical opportunity of the antediluvians, as well as for this much-needed light upon the ordinance of water baptism as preëminently a figure of salvation by the resurrection of the One who "died for our sins."

before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (v. 11). "And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (6:7, 8).

As has been said, in the midst of the ripened, reeking, smoking pollution of the world, Noah stood boldly and faithfully as "a preacher of righteousness." He even ventured, under these pestilential conditions, to obtain three sons, and they obtained wives; yet, such was Noah's influence of faith that all were "preserved in Jesus Christ" and kept "unspotted from the world" when God was "bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."

Now, it was by this life and achievement of faith that Noah—as a passage already quoted puts it—"became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7). By him, as well as to him, was being preserved from defeat the original prophetic purpose of God to redeem mankind by the promised One. That purpose survived in the faith of Noah the floods of the ungodly antediluvians, and that purpose was borne over the Flood, in the custody of Noah and his sons, into the new world to which the Redeemer should come. This is the significance of the Noachian flood,—it was the preservation through Noah of God's predicted purpose from being morally submerged and destroyed. It emphasizes the certainty of God's fulfillment of His purpose in Christ. For it shows that, rather than let that fail, He will cut off the race down to the last man and make of him a new race which shall see that purpose fulfilled.

CHAPTER VI.

THE POSTDILUVIAN PERIOD.

WHEN Noah, after one year and ten days of confinement in the ark, stepped forth upon the restored earth, his first act was to glorify God and to sanctify the new earth with sacrifices of burnt-offerings. And God entered into an appropriate covenant with him of future immunity of the earth from another flood of waters, notwithstanding God forecast the continued propensity of the human heart to "evil from his youth" (8:21).

While promising unfailing revolutions of the yearly ordinances of nature, and the abundant replenishing of the earth with the posterity of Noah, God promulgated three special new ordinances for the new world (Gen. 9:1-7):

1. Man's dominion over all beasts by the power of fear.
2. Man's addition of animal flesh to his dietary.
3. Man's execution of capital punishment for homicide.

These were not ordinances first introduced by Moses, and of a temporary nature, subject to suspension under the Christian dispensation, but they were world-ordinances, not subject to change before a new-world order should come in.

The prophecy of Noah concerning his three sons (9:25-27) forms an essential part of the structure of Biblical prophecy. So far as Ham was concerned, only curse was prophesied; but this curse pertained to only one of the four lines of his posterity. The mistake has often been made of regarding all Hamites as being under God's curse of servitude. This affected only the line of

the youngest son of Ham, Canaan; and it relates only to the Canaanitish nations whom God was to dispossess and exterminate for their iniquities, that His chosen Israel might occupy the land promised them. The black peoples generally were never declared to be inferior or subject to the white peoples.

Shem was given by prophecy preëminent blessing as Christ's covenant people, while Japeth should be blessed by coming into the tents of Shem; i. e., by coming into joint partnership with Shem in the Lord God, Jesus Christ. This prophecy lies at the foundation of Israel's calling, and of the calling of the Church as the later custodian of the oracles of God which were first committed to Israel.

The ethnic development and the territorial distribution of the Noachian race, charted in Chapter 10, finds its explanation in the account of the confusion of tongues and the consequent dispersion of mankind recorded in 11:1-9.

The postdiluvian world had inherited through Noah the benefit of the entire tradition of the old world. Noah was in the prime of his splendid manhood, well able to compass the history of all that age from the favorable standpoint he occupied in relation to it. He had not only the mental ability and the historical position qualifying him to be to the new world the all-sufficient historian of the old, but he had also the moral and spiritual character qualifying him to interpret aright to the new age the important practical lessons of the old age. As a "preacher of righteousness" he was better qualified than even before to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The demonstration of God's faithful and fearful judgment lay just behind; the constraints of God's mercies lent power to Noah's appeals; he spoke not to a sunken age of mankind, but to the select audience of his own sons—who were co-witnesses of that judgment and of those

mercies—and to the immediate posterity of those sons. Moreover, the new world had the advantage of the example, the recollections and the counsel of this godly person and unique historical character for three hundred and fifty years, reaching, according to the Hebrew time-reckoning, over one-half century into Abram's life, or well into the fourth generation, even according to the preferred chronology of the Septuagint.*

And yet God's forecast of the rapid corruption of the succeeding generations was signally realized. The Lord's charge to "replenish the earth," by a gradual, natural, territorial expansion,—by a normal dispersion, which, through unity of language and close consanguinity, should still preserve free and beneficial intercourse—was directly disobeyed. They migrated in a compact body and soon assayed to centralize themselves indissolubly and powerfully according to this proposal; "Let us make a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth."

Again, as before the flood, the purpose of God for mankind was threatened with defeat, and God was compelled to give judicial attention to "the children of men" at this juncture. He remarked upon it: "Behold, the people is one: and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." The Lord, therefore, confounded their speech, thereby forcibly dispersed the masses of people, and broke up city-building for the time being.

How vain, how audacious, to devise a science and a history of philology without reference to this record! This brief narrative teaches the devout reader that language is not the offspring of gibberish and jargon.

*It is repugnant to think that while Noah still lived the enterprise of Babel was undertaken. According to the Septuagint chronology Noah died probably about two centuries before Babel, which would give abundant time for his posterity to forget his influence and to come wholly to set aside Christ's charge to him to replenish the earth by normal dispersion.

Neither is diversity of tongues a matter of accidental variations and blind evolution. Language in its perfection was intuitive to man, and no tendency to variation was known in the antediluvian age, or for a long period after the flood. Diversity of tongue was not prevented by compact cohesion of society, neither was diversity the result of dispersion of family units; but diversity of speech was necessary to compel a dispersion of family groups. The existing variety of tongues is not due to evolution, but to sudden miraculous interposition. Moreover, the tongues of debased peoples of today do not represent crude stages of evolution, but more or less corrupted planes of languages once complete.

It is also to be said that variety of tongues is not ideal; it is Babel, and it is doomed to be done away with. Diversity of language is confusion, a judgment upon human defiance of God's law of diffusion instead of concentration of population. God's judgment, however, was tempered with mercy,—marvellous mercy. In disrupting the mass by confusion of their speech, He yet avoided disrupting families, by giving the family a common tongue. While disrupting the mass, He yet united the family-group more closely. The territorial dispersion, necessitated by the diversity of tongues, still admitted of beneficial social concentration within the limits of like blood and like language; but the way was barred to intolerable congestion of population, to caste cleavages, and to tyrannical oppressions.

Yet how largely this beneficent purpose of God has been scouted and frustrated by rebellious man! The beginning of the reversion of God's order is graphically, though briefly, portrayed in Chapter 10. In verse 25, we learn that it was in the days of Shem's great-grandson Peleg that the confusion of tongues and the consequent dispersion of the race occurred. By this dispersion the seed of Ham found their home on the continent of

Africa. Some branches of the Hamites pushed their way over into Asiatic territory, notably the Canaanites and the Cushites. The former preëmpted parts immediately to the east of the Mediterranean Sea, and they are familiar to us as the peoples which Israel was commanded to dispossess and exterminate because of their intolerable pollutions. The Cushites migrated eastward through southern Arabia, as the names of 10:7 indicate.

Now, verses 8-12 depart far from mere ethnic and geographical classification, to hold up in terse description a notable person, descended from Cush, who conceived a far bolder scheme of foreign exploit. Nimrod is his name: and it is said that he "began to be"; i. e., was the first one to be, "a mighty man in the earth." This indicates a world-conqueror, the world-lord, the Emperor, the prospective Anti-Christ. "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord"; i. e., commanding the Lord's special attention and disapproval. He was not a hunter of the lions of Africa where he belonged, but an empire-hunter, a conqueror and subjugator of other peoples. This was a new conception, not dreamed of even in the antediluvian world; but it is very old and common now,—in fact, it is the order of the present day with every "progressive nation."

There was no spot on earth so ideal for a world-center as old Babel. So Nimrod carried slow eastward Cushite immigration into swift, effective Cushite invasion and conquest. He caught the "backward" industrious Shemites napping, as it were. By a master-stroke the invader (we will imagine) unfurled the Cushite ensign from the tabooed tower of Babel, and quickly converted the half-built, abandoned city into a foreign citadel. He then started a compulsory dominion in rapidly expanding circles of successful conquest and city-building, as described in verses 10-12.

The "Early Babylonian Empire" was the result,—the mother of all world-empires, the beginning of an

order of God-defying, devil-inspired government which has survived to this day; which, perhaps, never had more intoxicating power than today, and which will not cease to be until God fulfills in our returning Lord what is promised in Dan. 2:35: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors: and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

The direct and important bearing of this old record of postdiluvian time will be apparent in due place in the study of the Book of Revelation. For it lays before us the foundation of that historic form of earthly government which at the last, under the headship of the Anti-Christ himself, will squarely dispute the right of God to have any people of His own on earth, and will stoutly withstand the return of Christ to have a kingdom here, or to be Lord of lords, and King of kings, the only rightful Emperor of all nations.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COVENANTS OF GOD.

THIS is a favorable point at which to give special attention to the series of covenants which God has made with man. And the importance of the matter will be appreciated, when it is said that these covenants form the arches upon which progresses the great causeway of divinely-ordained human history.

God deals with mankind on a unique principle,—that of obligating Himself voluntarily under great standing agreements of grace with men.

1. We have already seen what glorious franchises God granted to man when first created and placed on earth as ruler of all under the triune God. It certifies to the perfect qualifications of intuitive intelligence and administrative ability, with which man was endowed by creation, that God should give him full authority over the earthly order, with accountability only to the all-wise, and all-gracious Creator, Christ. This Edenic Covenant, then, endowed man with all earthly regency (Gen. 1:28).

2. Upon man's fall, the Lord God engaged to restore to mankind its forfeited proprietorship and rule through a promised One, of human birth, who should at personal cost and suffering deliver man from the oppressor, and lead him anew into earthly kingship. This Adamic Covenant placed man under redemption through the blood of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

3. God's third great standing compact of grace with mankind was given after the Flood to Noah as the founder of the new world-race in his seed. Two great agreements belong to the Noachian Covenant. First,

God graciously took the oath upon Himself no more to overwhelm the world with a flood of waters, even though, as He clearly intimated, there should be as good reason for so doing as before (Gen. 8:21). Secondly, through Noah God foreshadowed that the promised good for all mankind should be found in "the tents of Shem," the eldest of Noah's sons (9:26, 27).

4. We come next to the Abrahamic Covenant. By it God took out of the seed of Shem a certain individual named Abram, to make from him a special posterity out of which should spring the promised One, who should make at last that chosen people the channel of God's covenant blessing to all families of the earth (12:2, 3).

5. God next established the Mosaic Covenant. Having redeemed Israel from the judgment which He visited upon Egypt, and having released Israel from bondage by mighty signs, Jehovah adopted them unto Himself as "a peculiar treasure . . . above all people," as "an holy nation," and as "a kingdom of priests" unto Himself for the good of all men (Ex. 19: 5, 6). To this theocratic kingdom Jehovah promised the Coming One, first as a prophetic authority like unto Moses, who should speak in supreme meekness yet with absolute authority (Deut. 18:18), and later as "God of Jeshurun" (i. e., Israel the upright), who should appear for Israel's Millennial restoration (33:26-29) in the glory of His manifestation upon Mount Sinai as "King in Jeshurun" (vs. 1-5).

Some—mistakenly—include a "Palestinian Covenant" in the list, as though Deut. 29:1 (which should stand as the last verse of Chapter 28) implies another distinct covenant, relating to the occupancy of the Promised Land by Israel, instead of its merely reaffirming impressively as it does, the original Sinaitic Covenant with the new generation of people, whose fathers had been suspended from experiencing further progress of covenant operations.

6. Next in the list of God's great and enduring engagements of grace with man is the Davidic Covenant. It was occasioned by virtue of the demand of Israel for a visible monarchy in place of further theocratic rule. In infinite grace God conceded to them the demand for a visible king before the promised One should appear. But He reserved to Himself the choice of a permanent monarchic head and type, and He founded in David the Hebrew Monarchy. This He did because He found in David—like Abram of Old, and like Moses—one true to Himself, the yet unrevealed Christ; and it was promised to David that of his seed God should raise up the Coming One to rule the house of Israel and make them His kingdom of blessing to all nations of the earth (Psa. 89: 3, 4; Acts 2: 30).

7. *The New Covenant.*—In Jer. 31: 31-34 we read as follows:

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

While here applied to national Israel in her final perfect restoration and exaltation in the earth, yet this entire passage is quoted in Heb. 8: 8-12 as a covenant already brought into force through Jesus, and that, not for believing Israelites alone, but for all believers alike. And the next verse furnishes an important explanation regarding the sense of the expression, “a new covenant.”

The verse reads: "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Does this not clearly signify that the "new covenant" is not another and later covenant, which on that very account might in its turn also grow old and decay, but that it is the original covenant which can never grow old, that which, after the old Sinaitic Covenant of temporary expediency became outworn, comes back into effect through Jesus with all its original living force?

The same "new covenant" is manifestly meant by the expression "an everlasting covenant," in Jer. 32: 39, 40: "I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." This covenant is not only to everlasting, it is from everlasting. It is that which antedates, which underlies and survives, all the other covenants, which are temporary in form.

We have an analogy—indeed, practically the same thing—in the "New Commandment," as Jesus expressed it. Surely, when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another," He was not recognizing a new law but only the renewal of the old and original law. And He explained at once wherein the newness of this commandment lay, in the words: "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13: 34).

John, the Apostle, makes this principle very plain, when he writes of this law of brotherly love. He says, "A new commandment I write unto you." But he immediately explains what constitutes its newness by saying, "which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness [which had enwrapt true brotherly love]

is past, and the true light now shineth"; namely, in the example of Jesus then, and now by His Spirit in our hearts. Hence John insists, in writing of this law of brotherly love, "I write no new commandment unto you [i. e., not one that was never promulgated before], but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning [of divine revelation]." This "new commandment" was simply the "old commandment" brought out anew in perfect manifestation in Jesus.

We have a like analogy in the "new creature," which is not another person, but the same person only made new. Also in the "new heaven" and the "new earth," which are not to be another heaven and another earth, but the original heaven and earth renewed, restored.

The New Covenant is, therefore, not the latest in a list of seven covenants. It is God's original proffer to man, a proffer and an agreement which He has always held open to all men. From first to last, God has graciously engaged Himself to dwell and reign in human hearts through their loving obedience. He has had some under all dispensations who have been united to Him under this covenant, which is older than the foundations of the world and yet ever fresh, as from "the womb of the morning," with the dew of the immortal youth of the Son of God.

This New Covenant—this original, eternal and fadeless covenant of grace in Christ Jesus—gives the six great historic covenants their true character and their real aim. Upon this eternal foundation these covenants were reared as pillars for the support and progress of all human history from the beginning of creation till its imperishable restoration. One has not the true chart, whether of divine revelation or of divine providence, who is ignorant of this covenant-scheme. God has had one unwavering motive and one unalterable purpose of grace in relation to His human creature. He has moved forward under this motive and to the accomplishment

of this purpose by the successive stages which we have sketched in previous chapters and which we will more fully trace in succeeding chapters. These six historic covenants have been the governing arrangements of God with man, by which all human history has been making, and by which its further course will be shaped until the end is reached. That end is to be found in a redeemed Church, victorious in righteousness, and a redeemed earth and sky; or, as expressed by Peter, in "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness"; in fine, in an entire redeemed humanity victorious in righteousness. Then the New Covenant will fully and forever prevail.

PART III

Hebrew Prophecy—I. Abraham to David

CHAPTER I.

THE ABRAHAMIC PERIOD.

THE Scriptures repeatedly speak of God's calling Abram out of "Ur of the Chaldees." While perhaps the exact location of Ur cannot now be identified, yet the phrase, "of the Chaldees," includes Ur within the Babylonian region of the east. Joshua 24:2 expressly locates Abram's ancestral home "on the other side of the flood"; i. e., of the Euphrates.

The matter of particular importance just here is that Abram's early home was in the heart of that early Babylonian civilization which had been introduced and firmly established by Nimrod, as we have already noted. Abram's very ancestral home was, therefore, amidst most corrupted and alien surroundings and conditions.

While we have testimony to the faith of Abram's brother Nahor and of his father Terah (Gen. 31:53), yet it is confessed (Josh. 24:2) that the ancestors of the Hebrews "served other gods" while they "dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time." This indicates that an idolatrous state of society prevailed in that country, and that it so corrupted and threatened the "sacred line" as to render it necessary to separate the man of God's choice from such a situation.

Although the record (Gen. 11:34) indicates that Abram was led forth by his father Terah Canaanward, yet the call had already been given by God to Abram to forsake native land, kindred and paternal fireside (12:1). This call not only pushed him on with Terah from Ur to Haran, but also pushed him from Terah's adopted home to the promised land somewhere farther on.

Accompanying the call was the promise of God to

Abram (12: 2, 3) which was to set his life in line with the purpose God had, not alone for the special posterity of Abram, but for all mankind as well. This is important, as showing that the Abrahamic Covenant was only a later expedient of God for fulfilling the purpose already revealed in the Adamic Covenant; in other words, that the Abrahamic period is directly a stage of progress in the history of the earlier prophecy, and that its own prophetic material in turn is only a further special contribution to the volume of prophecy already begun in the first eleven chapters of the Bible.

The original Abrahamic promise is given us in the following language: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The details of this promise are easily summarized in the following three essential, out-standing terms of the agreement: 1. A given Land. 2. A distinguished Seed. 3. A worldwide Blessing.

Clearly the climax, the controlling object, lies in the words, "Thou shalt be a blessing," and, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This makes God's promise for Israel, not a freak of national favoritism, but a needs-be of the original purpose of grace for humanity.

This furnishes the key to God's dealings with Abraham's seed thus far, and to the dealings yet to come as shown by prophecy. Inasmuch as God has not been able thus far to gain His purpose through Israel, He has turned Israel down; but, inasmuch as the blessing of all families of the earth can be accomplished only through Israel, she must be uplifted again and become what God meant her to be for His great end in behalf of all mankind. And, as that end has from the outset been wrapped up in the promised One (Gen. 3: 15), even so must the

Israel that is to be a blessing to all earth's families be such by virtue of relationship to that Coming One.

All this justifies the Scriptures in giving its pages mostly to the drama of Hebrew history and prophecy. Hebrew history furnishes us with just so much of the divine program as has already been carried out; Hebrew prophecy reveals to us in advance the rest of the historical program as it will be just as literally carried out, till the final end is reached which God at the first announced. Consequently, a natural reading of the rest of the Old Testament from this standpoint makes it all easily intelligible; its reading after any other manner, or from any other—fanciful and theoretical—point of view, mystifies and perverts the whole Old Testament and leaves the New Testament in our hands like a kite without a tail; we might better have an abbreviated Bible, consisting of excerpts, of purely personal moral and spiritual application. The fact is, if we accept the Bible as it is, we should read it all just as it reads, and take it as it naturally and evidently means. And thus only do we get the fulness of the Gospel. For just this very promise to Abram, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," is the Old Testament trunk of the gospel-tree as Paul teaches in Gal. 3:8: "God..... preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." We fail also to preach the Gospel fully if we omit or pervert the prophecies relating to Israel's restoration to her high mission when Christ returns to rule as "King of the Jews."

After Christ had led Abram into Canaan (12:4), He told him when his feet were actually upon the promised territory (v. 7). Abram at once consecrated the spot. After that Christ from time to time appeared unto him, reiterated and further developed the promise.

1. After Abram magnanimously gave to Lot to choose for himself whatsoever and all that he desired of the land promised only to Abram (13:5-13), Christ gave

Abram promise of all the country his keen eye could from a lofty central point of vision descry; and Christ promised him an innumerable seed to occupy the same (13:14-17). This led Abram to take possession anew by faith by building an altar of consecration at Hebron (13:18).

2. After the battle of the nine kings and Abram's heroic, hazardous rescue of Lot (Ch. 14), Christ appeared to Abram with assurance of protection and reward (15:1). Through continuing childlessness Abram began to question whether the Lord God meant a literal posterity for him or only a technical one, descending from the chief man who had been born in Abram's great establishment. This led to Christ's covenanting with Abram for a seed to spring actually from his own loins (15:2-5).

It is important to note that God counted to him for righteousness Abram's acceptance of this assurance (15:6). This is the whole principle of justifying and saving faith. It is said that by this act Abram "believed in the Lord." It was Christ who communicated to him the assurance, as it was Christ who had just promised to be his "shield" and his "exceeding great reward." So Abram, on that occasion, took Christ as his Saviour, his treasure and his trust. This very act of Abram is made the sample and proof chosen for use by Paul in discussing in Romans the saving power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every one that believeth. Hence, Abram back there was as much a living member of Christ and of His body, the Church, as any one of us is now.

At that time God revealed to Abram that four centuries were to elapse before his seed should enter into possession of Canaan*; that his seed should become a

*It is worth the while right here to harmonize certain passages which, at first sight, appear to disagree with one another. Gen. 15:18, 14 reads: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall

people while in a state of affliction in a strange land; that from thence they should come forth with great substance by mighty judgment (upon their oppressors); and that the reason for this long delay was to give exhaustive probation to the apostatizing usurpers and occupants of Canaan (15:7-16.) (This is a very important revelation of the full probation which God affords to peoples of history and of the entire justification of God in directing Israel to possess Canaan by exterminating conquest.)

On this same occasion the Lord gave Abram a more extended knowledge of the scope of the promised land (15:18), extending from the boundary of Egypt to the Euphrates. We may with very strong probability understand by this that the whole Arabian Peninsula was included. For, in Gen. 26:3, 4, God promised Isaac "all these countries,"—clearly implying an entire group of associated territories and nations. Then, in Ex. 23:

they come out with great substance." This clearly refers to the bondage of Israel in Egypt and to the exodus. Apparently the period of Egyptian bondage is fixed at four hundred years. This same period of four hundred years of apparent Egyptian bondage is repeated in Acts 7:6: "that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years." But that the Egyptian bondage could not have prevailed for four hundred years is proved by Gal. 3:17: "The covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." This fixes the entire time from the giving of the covenant to Abram to the exodus as only four hundred and thirty years. And this difference of thirty years is no disagreement. For Gen. 12:1 reads, "Now the Lord *had* said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country," etc. The four hundred and thirty years date from Abram's original call while he was yet in Ur of the Chaldees, while the four hundred years date from an interview (thirty years later) between Christ and Abram some time after he had come into the land of Canaan. In perfect harmony with this is the record in Ex. 12:40: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Here the four hundred and thirty years are designated as "the sojourning of the children of Israel," not ~~the~~ Egypt, but "who [included in that time] dwelt in Egypt." Thus the entire "sojourning"—the pilgrim time, the homeless, unsettled time—was four hundred and thirty years, dating from Abram's call out from his native land to the call of his posterity out from Egypt. As a matter of fact easily figured out, just one-half of this time elapsed before Israel descended into Egypt, and only the remaining two hundred and fifteen years were spent there, and those years by no means all in actual bondage. Hence we are to understand Gen. 15:13 as though it read, "and they shall at the end of four hundred years" etc.

31, God said through Moses to Israel, "I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines [Mediterranean], and from the desert [Arabian] unto the river [Euphrates]." This seems quite clearly to include Arabia. It is a question whether "the uttermost sea" (Deut. 11:24) does not mean the far eastern sea, the Indian Ocean. Certainly, "the east sea" is given in Ezek. 47:18 as "the east side," or boundary, of the millennial land; and the Dead Sea could not there be meant, so, it must either be the Persian Gulf, or, more probably, the waters which bound Arabia on the east, the Indian Ocean.

It may be reasonably judged from the description of the land of Eden, given in Gen. 2:8-14, that this vast, quadrangular Arabian Peninsula is the modern representation of the original Eden. In this light we would read Ex. 15:17 with deepest interest: "Thou shalt bring them [Israel] in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established."

We are not, then, to be viewing the Promised Land as a country that was torn away from original possessors by a questionable course of exterminating conquest; but as the place which the Lord Christ had made for His own special geographical domain, residence and sanctuary in the earth. This had been unlawfully occupied and most foully polluted by alien intruders. He had borne with this displacement of Himself and this desecration of His holy earthly estate for many centuries, and until He had prepared a people of His own to occupy it with and for Him. The Lord declared the land to be "defiled," and that "the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants" (Lev. 18:25). And He warned Israel, "Defile not, therefore, the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel" (Num. 35:25); and "That the land

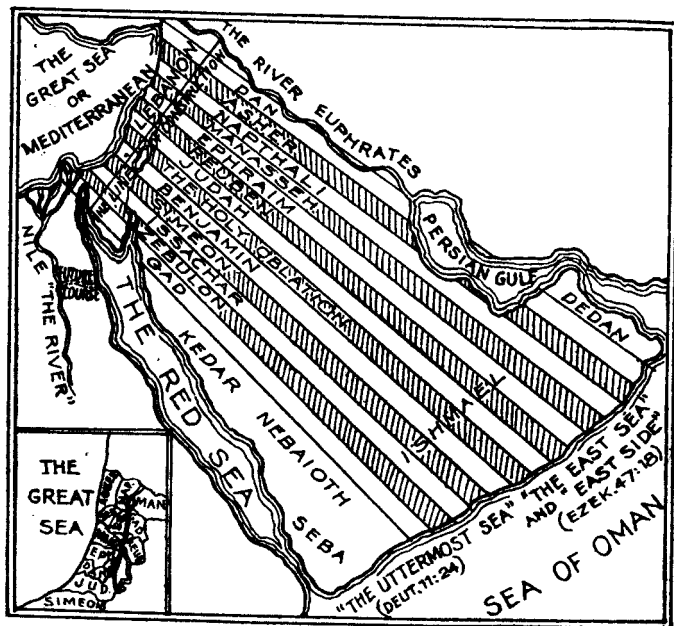
spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you" (Lev. 18:28).

It is true that this vast territory was never in the past nearly all occupied by Israel, even in the days of David and Solomon. It is true that for the greater part it has been in historic times a desert waste. But the promise to Israel in her final restoration is, "The Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste [ruined] places: and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord" (Isa. 51:3). There belongs to Zion, then, not only the land that has been depopulated, but also wilderness and desert expanses. These are to be converted into Edenic condition and made like the "garden eastward in Eden."

In Ezekiel 48 the territorial arrangement of the several tribes of Israel in their respective millennial allotments is clearly defined; and the accompanying diagram will show how the Arabian Peninsula will then be laid out according to the foregoing suggestion (page 98).

3. After years of childlessness, hope that God meant the promised posterity to spring from Sarah's womb as well as from Abram's loins died out; so Sarah gave her handmaid, Hager, to Abram "to be his wife," and Ishmael was born. Thirteen years later Christ appeared to Abram and stirred him up to walk before Him as "the Almighty God" (Chap. 17); and He promised to multiply him "exceedingly," and to make him "a father of many nations"; kings should come out of him; and the covenant of God should be with him and with his seed after him in their generations,—an "everlasting possession." And Christ re-named the old man of ninety-nine years, calling him Abraham,—father of a multitude.

It is made clear, in Rom. 4:11, 16, 17, that this statement of the promise included and especially emphasized that, in respect to this faith in the Almighty God, Abraham was to be honored as the faith-father of believers



SYRIA AND ARABIA
Showing the Resettlement of the Twelve Tribes

out of many nations. The Abrahamic faith was to be the blessing of many nations and the spiritual principle uniting believers from many nations in one Abrahamic family. This again emphasizes the unity in one spiritual body of all believers of both the Hebrew and the Christian dispensations.

On that occasion God appointed the circumcising of all males of Abraham's household, whether of his direct seed, or of such as were born from among his retinue, or of such as were bought with money for his estate. By this sign in the flesh was the people of Abraham to be distinguished and God's everlasting covenant with them individually and collectively to be sealed and retained.

At the same time the Son of God re-named Sarai, Abram's wife, as Sarah, the princess of this Father of Multitudes; and He pledged the old man that his aged wife should literally be the mother of the seed of promise.

It seemed not too much for Abraham to accept; and he even pleaded boldly that Ishmael might be included in divine favor. This God granted, promising to multiply him also exceedingly by giving him twelve sons who should be princes of a vast national posterity. But the covenant—the Messianic Covenant—was to be with Isaac, who should be born at the "set time in the next year."

4. It was evidently very soon afterward, that Christ, accompanied by two angels, appeared in human form to Abraham, Chapter 18. Abraham discerned the Lord and earnestly requested the privilege of entertaining the trio with a goodly repast. The Lord graced the meal by promising to return at the "time of life" for Sarah to have the promised son.

But the matter more especially furnished by this occasion, and that which is related to our subject, consists of Christ's determination to take Abraham into council with Himself over the purpose of visiting judgment upon the cities of the Plain. As His reason for not

hiding from Abraham what He was about to do, the Lord explained: "Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and that they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (vs. 18, 19).

This is most important as showing that the Abrahamic relationship to God is confidential and cooperative; that this relationship belongs to the calling to be a blessing to all nations; and that to be such a blessing it is necessary to "keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." In the light of Abraham's intercession on this occasion, we can find important light on the law of the believers' intercession in general. It means a calling to stand before God in prevailing intercession for the preservation of the righteous, and for the preservation of the ungodly also for the sake of the righteous in their midst; and yet to stand with God for justice and judgment upon the unbearably wicked, while trusting in God for the deliverance of the righteous from being taken in God's judgments on the wicked. While Abraham's natural and spiritual posterity both have fallen far short of the example set by him on this occasion, yet this example illustrates what is to be the unfailing cooperation of the finally restored Israel with God, that justice and judgment may be done in the earth for the promised good of all nations. See Isa. 61:6.

5. Once more the Lord met Abraham in important renewal of covenant engagements, Chapter 22. It was some years after the promised son had come, and it was on the occasion of Christ's putting Abraham's faith in Him to the supreme test of yielding up Isaac as a sacrificial offering to God. God had a right to require this under a law of creature-existence which we little recognize;

and there was no escape from it but through redemption by a substitutionary life. Abraham's words to the lad, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering," show that Abraham was entering boldly into the deepest mystery of his seed.

It is explained in Heb. 11:17-19 after this manner: that by faith—not alone by mere formal obedience—Abraham met the test of offering up Isaac; that to all intents and purposes he did actually offer up his only son, of whom it was expressly said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called"; and that he did so, "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." This last expression we take to mean that Isaac was received back from the altar as though dead in the ram and raised again from the dead. But that ram was to Abraham "a figure." He was to Abraham a sign and a type. He was a sign of "the angel of the Lord" who had just interposed from the skies as the living Redeemer in the invisible; and he was a type of that same Redeemer as the One promised to come visibly. The angel of the Lord is clearly found in vs. 15-18 to be God Himself; and as "The angel"—the Sent One—it must have been Christ, the Son of God, as in Gen. 22:11 and Ex. 3:2, 6. Accordingly Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). The identity of Isaac was now lost to Abraham's view in Christ, the Redeemer, of whom the ram was the symbol and the type.

Consequently, now, as God took occasion to renew the covenant with Abraham (vs. 16-18), He did so by a more solemn oath than before, and with new terms bearing new meanings. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea

shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

Paul says in Gal. 3:16 that the very expression here, "Thy Seed," means Christ. God was giving to Abraham the climax of all His revelations to him, in showing him that Isaac was lost in Christ, so that the real partner with himself to God's covenant was Christ, and Isaac only as he was a member of Christ; also that as Isaac was heir to the covenant only by virtue of being Christ's, so also all who are Christ's are thereby "Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29). We meet here again the wondrous truth that Christ's body embraces members from the old dispensation, and that in Him they are one with us and we with them.

The advance in prophetic material contributed by the Abrahamic period is very marked, both in proportions and in character. First, we have it illustrated that, however the prospects for the success of God's purposes in Christ may seem to recede, yet God has His eye right upon the very measure for turning the apparent misdirection to great futherance. It is out of the sunken and idolatrous state of the postdiluvian race that the "Friend of God" and "Father of Believers" is called forth, and all who are Christ's are declared to be spiritually Abraham's seed. In the next place, the channel of the birth of the "Seed of the woman" is sharply delimited and identified with "his Seed"; i. e., Abram's. Then the theater for the career of the Messianic people is carefully outlined geographically, and henceforth there is a "Holy Land" forever sanctified in the earth. And most important of all, the international relationships of this chosen people are strikingly designated,—on the one hand, being exalted in the enjoyment of security and blessing, and, on the other hand, being lost in the ministry of blessing unto all nations and families of the earth.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOSAIC PERIOD.

THE Abrahamic Covenant just dealt with was explicitly reaffirmed to Isaac as its next inheritor (Gen. 26:1-5). Three essential particulars are reiterated: 1. An innumerable seed. 2. The possession of "all these countries"; that is, as we have concluded, all the regions constituting the little continent bounded by the Euphrates River, the East, the Red and the Mediterranean Seas. 3. The blessing of all nations in Isaac's coming Seed, Christ. And it is noticeable that the promise is already secured beyond contingency by Abraham's obedience.

The next successor to the Abrahamic Covenant was Jacob. The primacy, which technically belonged to his twin-brother Esau, was appointed by God to Jacob at birth (25:23). Rebekah apparently instilled this calling into Jacob's mind from infancy, and they two made it their controlling aim. This aim God accepted of them and brought to success, although He disapproved their carnal measures and disciplined them appropriately. We should follow God's example in honoring Jacob for his purpose,—although not for his practices—in beholding him in the new man which struggled for and acquired ascendancy over the old man. No human name in Scripture is held more compassionately than that of Jacob or more reverently than that of Israel.

The steadfastness of Jacob's purpose to fulfill his high calling is attested by the fact that he was no mere youth when he supplanted Esau, but a man of some seventy-seven years of age; that at that age he still remained unmarried rather than marry outside the godly line;

and that God turned his exile to account in giving him a sanctified family.*

Jacob's extremity, when fleeing from his home before the murderous purpose of his brother Esau, was the occasion embraced by God for explicitly reaffirming to him the Abrahamic Covenant (28:13, 14) in its essential provisions.

Esau and Jacob were nearly one hundred years old when they were reconciled at Jacob's return. At the age of one hundred and thirty Jacob went down into Egypt,—not driven by the famine, but going in faith, following the direction of Christ, who said to him, "I will there make of thee a great nation" (46:3).

It was given to Moses to lead out of Egypt this great nation of Israelites. The third successor to the Abrahamic Covenant was not one son of Jacob, but all his twelve sons. To the saviour of the family, Joseph, was transferred from Reuben, the eldest, the birthright,—only in the persons of his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:1). To this composite nation the covenant was renewed at the time of the proposed exodus from Egypt (Ex. 5:1-8). And to Moses was given the charge of this great epoch in the progress of fulfilling God's promise to the patriarchs.

Moses was of the tribe of Levi and embraced officially for the time the functions of prophet, priest and king. He founded the Aaronic priesthood, and he exercised more than ordinary ruling authority. But, as was indicated before (p. 40), it was as prophet—the oracle of the laws of God—that he was most distinguished, and as such he was made the great prototype of Christ (Deut. 18:18). That this is to be treated as an important stage in the prophetic revelation is evident from the prominence given to it by Peter (Acts 3:22) in that most

*From Gen. 41:46, 47, 53, 45:6 and 47:9 it is found that Jacob was 81 years old when Joseph was born; and from Gen. 31:41 and 30:25-31 it is found that Jacob was 77 years old when he came to Laban.

comprehensive prophetic discourse which he delivered upon the occasion of the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful gate of the temple (Acts 3:12-26).

The first stage of Moses' work was in effecting the deliverance of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. This was accomplished through mighty blows of miraculous power, although the instrumentalities employed were natural. The divine inflictions, called "The Ten Plagues of Egypt," were simple operations of divine righteousness for a lesson, not only to Egypt, but also to the contemporaneous nations, and to all succeeding generations until Jesus' return. See Ex. 7:5; 15:14-16; Josh. 1:9-11; 1 Sam. 4:8; 6:6. The same manner of inflictions, only intensified and visited on far wider scale, will be employed by God in punishing the kingdom of Anti-Christ in the last days. See Rev. 8 and 9.

Yet Israel came not out of Egypt in their own righteousness. As Isaac lived only by the blood of the "ram caught in the thicket," even so Israel escaped God's death-blow upon all the first-born in Egypt only by the passover-lamb (Ex. 12:12, 13). Upon this was founded the perpetual passover feast (vs. 14-17). Thus Israel was always to witness that they were only "accepted in the Beloved," the then-hidden, but now revealed "Passover.....sacrificed for us" all (1 Cor. 5:7).

The Mosaic Covenant was entered into by Jehovah with Israel after reaching Mt. Sinai. The proposal as made by Him to them, and accepted by them, is found in Ex. 19:3-9. This covenant was offered to them as "the house of Jacob" and as "the children of Israel" (v. 3), not as the seed of Abraham. The argument for their acceptance of it was the vivid remembrance of what Jehovah had recently done for them (v. 4). The condition proposed was their loving obedience and faithfulness (v. 5). The proffer made by Christ was to take them from among all mankind as His "peculiar treasure," as a

"holy nation" unto Him, and as "a kingdom of priests" (vs. 5, 6).

It is plain that the special feature of this Mosaic, or Sinaitic, Covenant is that this nation was called to the most intimate relation of endearment with Jehovah and to fulfill the capacity of a "kingdom of priests." This is most striking and important.

It had not been plainly brought out before in God's covenants that one nation—this posterity of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—was to be a kingdom, and a kingdom unique in the earth in having no visible king like other nations, but in having the invisible Son of God for their King. And the evangelical character, which from the first had been appointed to Abraham's seed, is most practically and definitely evolved now in designating Israel as a kingdom of priests. For what is a priestly kingdom, but a kingdom of model worshippers, constituting the Mecca for worshippers from all the earth, and a kingdom engaged in gracious intercession in behalf of all other nations? That this covenant expressly revealed the Lord to be their actual King is evident from Deut. 33:5: "And he was King in Jeshurun when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together."

Now this King was the pre-incarnate Christ, the Son of God. This was the occasion preëminently referred to in John 1:11: "He came unto his own." The previous verse testifies to the presence of the eternal Word in the world which He had created and to the world's rejection of Him. Then this gracious approach to Israel, to make them His "peculiar treasure.....above all people," is introduced as the next stage of the wonderful career of the Word in His endeavor to reveal the Father to mankind;—"He came unto his own." (It is a mistake to refer this verse in John 1 to Christ's coming in the flesh, which is first introduced in verse 14.) Sadly is it added, "and his own received him not." The qualification, how-

ever, is made (vs. 12, 13) that, while the pre-Abrahamic world in general, and Israel as a body in particular, did prove faithless to Him, yet such individuals as gave Him their faith, their hearts, "to them gave he power [right] to become the sons of God." How plainly this shows that men could and some did believe on the Son of God and give their hearts to Him all through Old Testament times; and that they were born of the Spirit then as well as now! It follows that they were all members of Christ and are of the same spiritual body with ourselves.

While the statement, "His own received him not," seems to be contrary to what transpired at Sinai, we will readily see how true it was. For there was a firstly and a secondly at Sinai in the response of Israel to Christ.

After Israel had promptly met Jehovah's requirement of obedience with, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," the Lord proceeded to issue the Magna Charta of the theocratic kingdom in the form of the Decalogue. This was uttered by a kingly voice from above and with demonstrations of divine royalty, which at once exhibited the immeasurable distance between Israel's King and the kings of the earth. Legislative enactments were added, which are recorded in Chapters 21-23. These were specific applications of the great fundamental principles embodied in the Ten Commandments. They were "court decisions" given in advance by the King as interpreter of His law.

Now, manifestly, we have no right understanding of the Decalogue and its accompanying statutes, if we fail to take them as enunciating the ground principles and the practical code belonging to this "kingdom of priests" unto the Son of God.

NATURE AND PURPOSE.

In the first place, the Mosaic ordinances of the Sinaitic Legislation are not the laws of a self-righteous, legalistic

religion; but they are the basal principles and the practical applications of closest heart-relationship with Christ, and of whole-hearted brotherly love and Gospel service. They represent the intelligent, cordial walk in the law of the Lord on the part of those who have the law of the Spirit of life in Christ in their hearts. That this is the case is proved by the fervent expressions of devotion to God's law in every phase which are to be found in so many of the Psalms, notably the one hundred and nineteenth.

Hence, while these may be the original, formal legislative enactments of the law of God, it is not new revelation, but only the codifying of the law of Christ revealed from the beginning to the heart of man. Consequently, this code is not obsolete for us today. Granted that Jesus revealed the spiritual light more clearly,—the life in Him had been the "light of men" before Sinai (John 1:4); it was the light of the Sinaitic code; and that light, against which the darkness of fallen man was and ever is struggling desperately (see Rom. 1:18-32), was brought in its perfect, original, changeless glory into living human expression in the person, the walk, the teachings and works of Jesus of Nazareth,—the Word, the Son of God, "made flesh." Therefore, this Mosaic code will be swallowed up in, not superseded by, the millennial, yea, even the eternal, order of divine government in the earth.

When Moses reported to the people "all the words of the Lord and all the judgments," "all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do" (24:3). Thereupon Moses wrote all in a book; and beside an altar of sacrifice and twelve pillars of witness, one for each tribe, he read all the words again; and the people responded, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Then "he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both

the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you" (Heb. 9: 19, 20).

After this, Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel went up and worshipped in the very sight of Jehovah their King, but afar off. Moses, however, attended by Joshua alone, ascended into the mount near to "the sight of the glory of the Lord." After seven days the Son of God called Moses into His sublime presence in the very midst of the glory-cloud.

Now a king should have actual residence among his people, and he should have appropriate audience and intercourse with them. Accordingly, Ex. 25-31 follows with Christ's minute directions to Moses for building Him a royal pavilion—the Tabernacle—as His place of residence and of audience in the midst of Israel, and for constituting the priesthood as the medium of intercourse and communion between the great King and His people, or, as we may say, for constituting the King's court on earth.

Even as a matter of purely earthly propriety, it would belong to a king to dictate all details of his residence and court. But in the present case, all these things were not merely matters of the King's taste and wish, but especially "patterns of things in the heavens" (Heb. 9: 23). The heavenly King alone knew "the heavenly things themselves" and what, therefore, would be true patterns thereof, that is, true material and visible symbols thereof. Hence, any deviation in construction, in personnel, in equipment, in ceremonial, would really be a sacrilege,—a perversion and denial of heavenly things. More specifically, all these things visualized by suitable symbolism the invisible things of the King Himself; deviation, therefore, in any particular would be not only a disobedience to direction, but an insult to Himself,—a denial of Him in some divine and heavenly reality

subsisting in Him. In other words, it would be following in the way of Cain.

So much for the firstly at Sinai, the apparent cordial reception of the King. Alas, there was a secondly soon to follow.

While Moses was receiving all these instructions during forty days of communion with Christ in the midst of the glory-cloud in Sinai, the congregation of Israel through Aaron fell into calf-worship and sensual revelry, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (32:8). The Son of God had given Moses in the mount two tables of stone engraven by His finger with the Ten Commandments. In dismissing Moses, He apprised him of the apostasy of the people, and He proposed to destroy them and make of Moses a great nation. But Moses met the exigency nobly and dissuaded Christ, by holding fast with Him to His oath unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (32:11-14). But, when Moses actually faced the spectacle below, he dashed the tables of stone to fragments in token of the ruptured covenant (v. 19).

Yet, after thoroughly exposing to Israel the enormity of their offense, Moses said, "Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin" (v. 30). Upon such atonement depended all future progress of Jehovah's arrangements with Israel. After confessing to the King the "great sin" of the people, Moses placed the situation thus before the Lord: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (v. 32). This meant, "forgive, if there be available atoning ground; otherwise, accept me for an atoning sacrifice." Jehovah in return forgave the nation, while holding individuals guilty (v. 33); and He directed Moses to lead the people on to the land of promise, assuring him of angelic escort, but refusing Himself to go up in their midst, lest He should

have to consume them for obduracy (v. 34). Moses, however, pleaded until the King consented to go up among the people as at first proposed.

Thereupon, Moses was emboldened to beg the King to show him His glory. This He promised to do. He bade Moses to come up into the mount again with new tables of stone. There He revealed Himself to Moses as "The Lord, The Lord God"; i. e., the Covenant-God, the Christ,—abundant in mercy, but not forgetting iniquity altogether (34: 6, 7). Moses took immediate advantage to secure to Israel their King's pardon and His acknowledgement of them afresh as His inheritance (v. 9). Christ promised to do unparalleled things before Israel in taking them into Canaan, but warned them against faithlessness to Him there (vs. 10-17). Thereupon the Lord appointed the great sacred feasts, especially the three annual feasts, Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. He directed Moses to write these further words, saying, "for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." This is not a new covenant, but the new revelation of the real tenor of the original covenant. He then wrote again the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone. Moses returned to the people with a face shining with the grace and glory of the King which had been revealed to him on this critical occasion.

What does this all signify? It surely means that henceforth Israel's covenant with her King was not conditioned upon brittle promises of obedience. There never has been a time since that their King has threatened to revoke His covenant with them and exterminate them, although Israel continued to be the same stiffnecked and disobedient people.

Now the fact that it was not necessary for Moses to make an atonement or to get one made, but that he only had to get hold of the real existing character of their King and of His relation to Israel, shows that the atoning basis of the Mosaic covenant had existed from the be-

ginning, and that the covenant was really not proposed originally on any other ground. The people did not so understand it. Moses even had needed a further revelation on the matter. The people evidently promised obedience as the condition of the covenant on their side,—as though the covenant were one of works and not of grace, of selfrighteousness and not of the righteousness of faith. They little comprehended that their King was their righteousness before God, and that their own righteousness was all and only of Him through faith.

It is a serious, although a common misunderstanding, that either the Israelite had no salvation whatever for the time being, or that his acceptance before God was upon a different basis from that of the Gospel. The former alternative is incredible, as it is contrary to all evidence; the latter alternative is impossible, because “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” There can be but one way of acceptance before God; namely, through the eternal Mediator, God’s Son, the Christ,—now Jesus Christ, “the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.”

The law in the letter—“written and engraven in stones”—as an exaction upon the flesh instead of a direction in righteousness to the willing, holy heart and spirit, was, and is, “a ministration of condemnation,” a “ministration of death.” But, as has already been said, the Mosaic code was not a mere external exaction, not the way to life, the way to God; but it was intended to be the child of God’s way of life, or way of walking with his father; it was the way for Christ’s “holy nation” to serve Him as their glorious King. His living presence was to have been their light, as He was their righteousness. In His presence was to have been fulness of joy, His law was to have been their delight, His favor their prosperity. The law throbbed with this divine yearning: “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments

always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"

All this, and far more, was meant when Moses returned with new tables of the covenant and with shining face. True, "they were afraid to come nigh him." But it was not for lack of grace, but in spite of grace; "their minds were blinded" (2 Cor. 3:14) and the Spirit of grace was not in their hearts. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" (Psa. 103:7). Moses pleaded, "Show me now thy way, that I may know thee," and his shining face was the result. But poor, carnal Israel knew their King only by His amazing acts; they stood in terror before them, and they pleaded with Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19).

This really shows why the dispensation of the law was introduced. The world at large—Israel not excepted—was deep in transgression and in ignorance of God. And Paul says of the law, "It was added because of transgressions" (Gal. 3:19). The covenant of promise, of grace, had been "confirmed before of God in Christ"; the law did not annul that covenant; it did not supersede or suspend it; it did not stand contrary to it; it "was added,"—it was a reinforcement, "because of transgressions." It was altogether intended to help on the covenant of grace, which was being weak "because of transgressions,"—multiplying transgressions among mankind.

The law being but an assistant was, then, neither original nor final. For how long was it intended? "Till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). And "wherefore then serveth the law?" Answer,—"By the law is the knowledge of sin," and, "the law worketh wrath" (Rom. 3:20; 4:15). So it worked with Israel. The law, which they so glibly promised to obey, they straightway flouted—notwith-

standing the thunders of Sinai. But, lo, the shattered tables, the angry lawgiver's flashing eyes, the draught of water impregnated with the powder of the golden calf, the fall of three thousand Israelites under the consecrated sword of the Levites,— all prepared Israel to hear and feel the words of Moses, "Ye have sinned a great sin."

"Wherefore then serveth the law?" Answer again,— "The Scripture hath concluded [shut in] all under sin" (Gal. 3:22). Is that not dreadful, fatal? Ah, no! This is the gracious purpose, "that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ [the promise which pointed to Christ in Jesus] might be given to them that believe." In other words, the law goes forth to "round up" all sinners of mankind, especially of Israel (and modern Pharisees and moralists). After getting them all penned up inescapably, the promise of life in Christ Jesus is sent forth anew for every one who will repent of sins and dead works, and just believe.

Hence, "before faith came [i. e., Jesus Christ, the Promised One, the object of faith] we were kept under the law (v. 23). It does not say that we were "kept under," but "kept"; and the keeping was under the provision of the law. Under the law stiffnecked Israel were being kept till Jesus came. It was no fatality that they were "shut up," forcibly imprisoned. They were "shut up unto," forcibly restrained from breaking clear away from something most needful. "Shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." That is, they were put under saving duress until the object of their faith should arrive and not find them missing. What a marvel of grace, then, was the law! It was a necessary measure to hold Israel to their King invisible until He should come in visible flesh. The law helped them, though by stern force, to fellowship with their King while He was yet unrevealed. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [pedagogue, the one who dragged the refractory child away to the hands of the teacher]

to bring us to Christ [not a distant, coming, revealed Christ Jesus, but the living, present Christ invisibly in their midst], that we might be justified by faith" (v. 24), not by works. "But after that faith [i. e., Christ, the object of faith] is come, we are no longer under a school-master. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," whether in olden times before He came in the flesh, or since He came in the flesh, whether Jew or Gentile.

We understand now what it meant that Moses at once carried forward the contributions for the building of the Tabernacle, for its furnishings and belongings, (Ex. 35:39). Their King was having preparation made for court residence in Israel and fellowship with them on terms of infinite grace. When all was finished exactly after the pattern, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 40:34, 35). But there is no mention of terrifying effects or of fatal results to the unworthy people.

The Book of Leviticus now follows, setting forth the manner of court intercourse between Israel and Christ her indwelling, though yet unrevealed King. And it is to be specially noted that the Levitical ceremonial, while its observance was so imperatively enjoined and its sanctity so strictly guarded, yet was all an economy of saving grace. The ceremonial details were "means of grace," the tokens of redemption and of gracious intercourse with God. They were never intended to be fulfilled as works of legalism, but as the works of faith, of love, of gratitude, of "joy and peace in believing." For, just as the construction and the equipment of the Tabernacle were patterns of heavenly things, so was the whole sacrificial ritual. All was symbolical of invisible realities in Christ, their mediatorial King.

Still further, all was typical—or predictive—of what should be revealed in their Redeemer-King when He should be manifested in the flesh. That is, by the Levitical rites the Israelites were dealing symbolically—but actually, by faith—with their Mediator and Saviour invisibly present among them in all His offices; and they were testifying to His future appearing in exact counterpart to all that was symbolically set forth in Tabernacle, priesthood and sacrifice. The intense legal character of it all was not designed to create religious legality, but, as we have seen, to “shut up [Israel] unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed,” to keep a fast, firm hold upon a people “bent to backsliding” until faith in Christ should turn to sight.

It does not alter the case that Israel was for the most part punctilious in the law only as a system of legalism. Such is the very general fault of religiousness among Christians today. Alongside the false Israelite—who prided himself in Abrahamic descent, circumcision, and the keeping of the letter of the law—was the true Israelite, whose birth out of Abraham was not after the flesh only, but after the faith of Abraham as well; whose circumcision was “that of the heart, in the spirit,” whose sacrifices were brought with “a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.” Nothing else was ever enjoined or approved of God. Of the other God had to say, “I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them” (Isa. 1: 11, 14).

We feel justified in embracing in our work so long a discussion for two reasons.

First, it is necessary for us, in arriving at a constructive harmony and unity of the whole Bible, to perceive that the basis of grace on God’s part toward man—which we have seen subsisted from the beginning of mortal man’s history—was not superseded by legalism under Moses, but was really confirmed by it; and also that the

New Testament revelation of grace does not "make void the law," but only avails to "establish the law" (Rom. 3:31). In other words, the Gospel preached to fallen Adam, and "preached before.....unto Abraham," was preached anew unto Israel through Moses; and that Gospel was "the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,"—not at all "another," but the "everlasting gospel." This is in accord with the record concerning Jesus, that "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

Secondly, The Levitical ritual, besides being the symbolical vehicle of faith's saving and sanctifying dealings with a present living Redeemer, was the prophetic presentation typically of the "riches of grace" to be revealed in that same Redeemer when manifested in the flesh. This brings the whole Levitical economy integrally into the body of Biblical prophecy. It would require a volume to expound adequately the Levitical system in its predictive significance, as well as in its symbolical significance.

CHAPTER III.

THE MOSAIC PERIOD CONTINUED.

A FALLACIOUS THEORY.

TAKING up now the further direct predictions of the books of Moses, we pause a little, to refer to what is commonly taken to belong very vitally to Biblical prophecy, even to the extent of constituting a measuring-line of prediction relating to the Times of the Gentiles. We refer to the expression "seven times" found in Leviticus 26: 18, 21, 24, 28.

The context is held very commonly to be a definite prediction; namely, that of the subjection of Israel to Gentile rule and affliction. It is further taken as relating to the oppression of Israel by the Gentiles from the time when the Davidic monarchy was subordinated to Babylon, in 606, B. C., till the return of Jesus to restore the Davidic kingdom under Himself as the King of the Jews. Then the term "seven times" is taken as a chronological measurement covering all this time,—“The Times of the Gentiles.” And lastly, the phrase, “seven times” is taken to mean 2520 years as exactly measuring the time of Israel’s lost kingdom.

This is the way in which it is made out that the expression “seven times” cryptically means 2520 years. The word “times” is taken to mean years,—sacred years, of 360 days to the year. These seven times, or years, would total 2520 days. Then it is assumed that each day stands for a year. This assumption is based on Num. 14: 34 and Ezek. 4: 5, 6. There, first, the children of Israel were commanded to wander in the wilderness forty years, “a year for a day” over against the forty days the spies were searching Canaan; and, secondly,

Ezekiel (4: 4-6) was commanded to lie first so many days on one side and then so many days on the other side, "a day for a year" according to the years of Israel's and of Judah's sins before God.

The consequences of this scheme are so far-reaching,—especially as its advocates bring them forth in interpreting Daniel and Revelation, and generally in making present-day prognostications apparently out of the Scriptures—that we feel compelled to adopt the scheme at this point in our work or to show our reasons for rejecting it.

1. Is Leviticus 26 a prophecy? We answer, No! The chapter forms two contrasted sections, vs. 1-13; and vs. 14-45. If one part, the latter, is prophetical, the former must also be. In fact, however, the former part is only a bright conditional promise; and the second part is no more than a forbidding conditional warning. The former part promises rich blessing for obedience; the latter threatens fearful chastisements for disobedience. That the latter has been signally fulfilled does not make it a prophecy, but only a fulfilled threat.

But, as a warning fulfilled strikingly in Israel's history, we submit to the careful reader the allegation that the punishment and the restoration of Israel, described in verses 29-45, exactly fit that of the Jews' captivity in Babylon and of their restoration therefrom, and that it would not apparently apply or refer to the final dispersion and restoration of Israel at all.

2. Even a casual reading—still more a searching one—of verses 14-28 must convince an unprejudiced mind that the term "seven times" is one not of chronology, but only of intensity, of degrees.

Verses 14-17 warn Israel of severe chastisement if they despise God's commandment and break His covenant. Thereupon verse 18 reads, "And if ye will not yet for all this [chastisement] hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." We submit that

the law of discourse requires us to understand this as a threat of sevenfold increased chastisement for failure to profit by previous punishment. This severer dealing is described in verses 19, 20, which add new features of misery. Thereupon verse 21 reads: "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." Here again, it would be illogical to think of anything but a threat of intensified punishment for persisting obduracy. This advance in punishment is clearly described in verse 22, and it adds new and worse features of misery. Thereupon again verses 23, 24 more urgently threaten them: "And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins." And verses 25, 26 describe this greatly heightened degree of chastisement. Finally, verses 27, 28 follow the same course of threatening: "And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me: then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins." And, as might be expected, an extended picture of this extreme and conclusive chastisement follows. And it is to be noted that, while the former inflictions all pertained to sufferings short of expulsion from the land, the last one describes the miseries of siege, destruction and captivity.

The expression "seven times" repeated four times, marks the advancing gradation of afflictions rendered necessary in case of failure to gain Israel's repentance and obedience. The case would seem to require no argument. A simple-minded reader will say to himself, "What that expression means once in this passage, it must mean all four times. It evidently means a divinely apportioned, perfectly adapted reinforcement of punishment from degree to degree as the obstinacy of Israel compels." Yet, if it be admitted that it means a time of

measurement once, then it must mean the same all four times. If it means 2520 years once, then, all told, this passage must cover a total of 4×2520 , or 10,080 years of punishment of Israel, besides corresponding intervals of probation between.

3. To us it seems very far-fetched and, indeed, contrary to analogy to assume that days stand for years here. (Note that in one passage referred to it is "a year for a day," and in the other, "A day for a year"). The very fact that, in those passages, the explanation is made that the periods are not to be taken in a natural way, and that the unusual way needs to be explained, shows that anywhere else like language is to be taken in its natural sense, unless otherwise stated. It follows that the passage before us requires no "key" to a cryptic meaning.

4. It should be added that, if this scheme of "a day for a year" were to be adopted, the very fact that the 2520 years are made out from seven "sacred years," of 360 days each, logically requires us to take the 2520 years as sacred years of 360 days each. By so doing, we reach a result which throws the whole theory out of further consideration. For all allow that the Times of the Gentiles began in 606, when Nebuchadnezzar first took Jerusalem. From that date 2520 civil years would have expired already; namely, in 1916. But, taking sacred years, each of $5\frac{1}{4}$ days less than the civil year, and the 2520 years must have expired nearly forty years prior to 1916; that is, in 1876.

It is the writer's solemn conviction that this one fallacy is to a very serious degree keeping the light of prophecy "under a bushel"; and he wishes to exhort his brethren most earnestly to examine this matter with the utmost candor and care.

ISRAEL'S DEPARTURE FROM SINAI.

After tarrying at Sinai one year, less ten days,—covering which time the large section of the Bible from Ex. 19:1 to Num. 10:13 was contributed—the Israelites renewed their journey toward Canaan. The remainder of Numbers, however, belongs only to the brief periods prior to, and subsequent to, the “Forty Years’ Wanderings” commonly so called, or, more exactly, the period of thirty-eight years during which the people were arrested by God for the dying off of the old unbelieving generation (Deut. 2:14). Careful examination leads us to conclude that not a line of narrative is given to those years,—it was lost time. And yet a very wrong impression is often entertained, to the effect that all this time Israel had no smiles, but only frowns, from their King. Hence, very luminous and cheering are such observations as those of Deut. 2:7; 8:2-4; 29:5, 6, and Neh. 9:19-21.

A notable prophecy is found in connection with Israel’s conquest of territories east of the Jordan which opposed Israel’s peaceable progress. This is Balaam’s prophecy in Num. 24:17-19. This recreant prophet was compelled to bless Israel whom Balak, king of Moab, sought to have cursed, and to predict the rise in Israel of the Messianic conqueror, before whom Moab and “all the children of Sheth” should be utterly smitten. “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.”

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

The Book of Deuteronomy—an extended reiteration and amplification of the Mosaic legislation, given to the new generation of Israel as they stood at the portal of the land of promise—demands our attention on both lines that have already been discussed, the evangelical character of Mosaism, and the prophetic contribution.

1. One fails to read Deuteronomy with intelligent sympathy, who does not find the Gospel principle of love everywhere as the motive of practical requirement.

It is true that merciless extermination of the Canaanites is commanded; but not as a mere military conquest, or as a ruthless savagery. The Lord told Abraham (Gen. 15:15) that not for four hundred years could his seed possess the land promised; “for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.” In Lev. 18 a list of social defilements is prohibited Israel, with the reminder: “for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you; and the land is defiled; therefore do I visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants”; and, “that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations which were before you” (vs. 24, 25, 28). “For the wickedness of these nations doth the Lord thy God drive them out before you,” said the Lord again (Deut. 9:5). The conquest of Canaan is never to be considered as a savage act belonging to a semi-barbarous age or people. It was Christ’s own sovereign judgment, justly due and necessary for the welfare of humanity. Had Israel been in full sympathy with Christ the extermination would have been complete, and the occasion for Israel’s decline in morals afterwards would have been obviated.

It is also true that severe penalties were ordained by Moses for various offenses which may now be condoned by many. See Deut. 13. But these penalties must all be regarded as safeguards to community, domestic

and private interests. And here again, had Israel executed these penalties in holy fear and zeal, she would have preserved herself from internal decay and from provoking—compelling—God to deal so harshly with her.

God's motive was that of love; His ordinances were all in the interest of grace; and He sought to get Israel to coöperate with Him in motive and aim.

Toward all foreigners Israel's attitude was to be actively peaceable (20:10-18). In sacking a hostile city ruthlessness even toward "trees for meat" was to be avoided (20:19, 20).

Mercifulness, compassion, tender consideration to the utmost degree of righteousness is inculcated in Deuteronomy far and way beyond anything reflected in the laws of Christian lands today.

A true Israelite had God's Spirit in his heart, filling it with Christly love and actuating his conduct in every relation. This may be presented graphically to the eye by a simple diagram. (See page 125.)

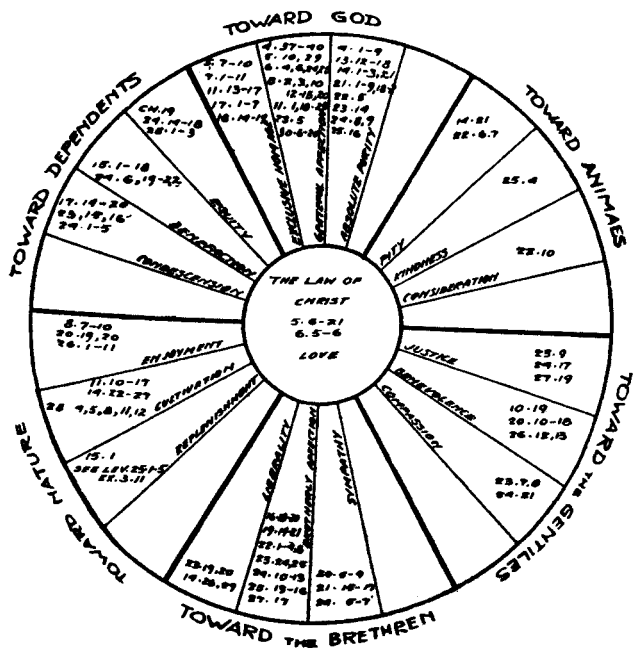
It was from Deuteronomy that our Saviour quoted almost verbatim in summarizing the law of Moses: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40). We utterly fail, then, to comprehend or summarize the law of Moses aright, if we do not suspend all from this law of love, in its Godward and its manward application. This is also the clew to Christ in the historical and prophetic writings.

But did not Jesus say, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another?" Yes! But He did not say, "Another commandment"; He said only a "new" one. His next words explain wherein the newness lay, "as I have loved you, that ye also love one

CHART

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

Enjoining upon Israel the Practices of the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, as enunciated in the Decalogue and as ruling in the heart through Jehovah Christ's indwelling, there working to will and to do of His good pleasure. See Matthew 22:36-40; Romans 13:8-10; also Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:17, 18.



(The small circle represents the true Israelite's heart exercised by the law of love springing from the indwelling Christ. The larger wheel represents the radiation of this law of love out in the believing, consecrated Israelite's relationships in appropriate principles and sentiments of conduct.)

another." Jesus' example of brotherly love was a renewing of the original law in its true and clear meaning. This easily and beautifully reconciles the apparent contradiction in 1 John 2:7, 8: "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." No "new commandment," and yet "a new commandment." The "old commandment"—"heard from the beginning"—had suffered almost total eclipse, and had come under "darkness"; but in Jesus the true light of the law of love burst forth anew, the practically lost, or effete, commandment was recovered, and Christ's example is to us this new-made commandment.

2. As to the prophetic contribution of Deuteronomy, we have already noted the important prediction of Jesus Christ as the Prophet to be raised up like unto Moses (18:18).

What has been said as to the prophetic character of the Levitical order applies, of course, to the passages in Deuteronomy which pertain to that order. We will, however, refer to the command—which was to apply after Israel had settled in Canaan—that all sacrifices should be offered at one place only, such as God should choose (Chapters 12, 16). The place finally chosen was where Christ invisibly dwelt among them as mediatorial King, and where His mediatorial sacrifice in the flesh should in due time be accomplished. The confinement of all sacrifices to this appointed spot identified them directly both symbolically and typically with the person of Christ; indeed, this gave the sacrifices their only true value. And because of this Israel could offer no sacrifices while in captivity, and she does not, dares not, offer any sacrifices now in her dispersion.

Chapter 28 fully corresponds to Lev. 26. It would be a

mistake here as well as there to read prophecy into the passage, especially prophecy of the last days.

In 31:16-30 direction is given to Moses—with the reason for it—to write a “Song,” a prophetic song, which should be for a subsequent “witness for me,” says God, “against the children of Israel,” not to be forgotten “out of the mouth of their seed.” In verse 29 this Song is expressly referred to the “latter days.” The Song is given in Chapter 32; and verses 34-43 clearly express God’s purpose—after exhaustively chastening Israel—to avenge her of all her enemies, and to restore mercy and favor to her, to the joy and rejoicing of all nations.

Lastly, this Song anticipates Moses’ prophetic Blessing upon the finally perfected millennial Israel. This Blessing is given in Chapter 33. The chief feature of this marvellous prophetic vision should not be missed. The passage calls our attention, not chiefly to the blessed people, but to the Blessor Himself.

The prologue (vs. 2-4) reads: “The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined from mount Paran [Sinai], and he came with ten thousands of saints [angels]: and from his right hand [of power] went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people [Israel]: and all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was a king in Jeshurun [*the upright one*, meaning Israel], when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.” What a vivid and august description this is of the inauguration of our Lord at Sinai as Israel’s mighty, loving King and Head!

This was the beginning of Christ’s invisible reign as King of Israel. The epilogue (vs. 26-29) of this prophetic millennial Blessing of the tribes of Israel describes our Lord’s inauguration in visible, glorified reign

over Israel: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth [in His second coming] upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God [Jesus Christ] is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy [Anti-Christ and his host] from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them. Israel shall then dwell in safety alone [in her land]: the fountain of Jacob shall be a land of corn and wine: also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord [Jesus Christ], the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee: and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Surely the Mosaic period, with its great body of Scriptures, nobly advances the prophetic progress and outlook of the Bible. We find ourselves lifted to a very high level of spiritual tone, of mental comprehension and of prophetic outlook. The stream of grace becomes a deep, wide, strong river of revealed love and of redemptive goodness. The instrument of that grace becomes a great people, taken up by Jehovah into unique relationship with Himself as Lord and King in their midst. The wealth of symbolical material serves vastly to expand the spiritual perception and enjoyment of the wonderful Christ and King, and to vivify the eternal realities in Him which shall be brought to light in human expression when as visible King He appears in the midst of His chosen people. And direct prophetical additions serve to point out more precisely the person and offices of the Coming One, as well as to forecast the entire history of Israel,—both the forbidding side of her sins and her judgment, and the inspiring side of her final transformation into meetness for the King's use as a holy nation and a Kingdom of priests.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE DAVIDIC PERIOD.

UNDER this period, we will for convenience include the history from the settlement of Israel in Canaan to the division of the Hebrew kingdom, taking in the corresponding Scriptures of history and poetry.

As has already been intimated (pp. 41, 85), to this period belongs God's crowning prophetic covenant with Israel,—the Davidic Covenant—promising the Coming One as not only the Son of David but also as the restorer and inheritor of his throne. The history of this period revolves about the throne of David.

After Israel's settlement in the Holy Land, the nation—which had been so systematically and compactly organized theocratically by Moses and led as a solid whole into possession of the promised land—very soon lost spiritual vision so far as to have left no steady, cohesive national consciousness. This state is reflected in the Book of Judges, the story of which—so heroic in episodes, and yet so depressing on the whole—is explained by the oft-repeated observation: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

The theocratic order was not only ample in provision for the rule of a spiritual and obedient Israel, but it was perfect and ideal. Yet, way back in Deuteronomy, it had been plainly intimated that in time a monarchy would be established over Israel like that of other nations (Deut. 17:14-20). Such proved to be the wavering, backsliding, non-cohesive character of the tribes of Israel, that an outward autocracy was needful, humanly speaking, to maintain unity and prestige.

We are not to understand that true religion had deserted the family circle or even the consciousness of the community. While religious conceptions and habits were to a great extent sadly corrupted, yet very refreshing glimpses of rich genuine piety are not wanting in the history of the Judges. Especially impressive in this regard is the story of the Book of Ruth, which belongs to this period and which unfolds to us the romance of God's gracious contrivance and superintendence touching the ancestral line of David, who was to be the king of God's choice over Israel.

To the closing stage of the period of the Judges belongs the story of the transfer of the priesthood from the house of Eli to that of Samuel, who was of another branch of the priestly descent. Here we find how keenly God resented laxity in official religious obligations, and how quick he was to reward heartfelt zeal for His name.

In Samuel we have the last and the best of the Judges. From the irregular character of the Judges, commonly so-called,—those who characterize the Book of Judges—we are not to infer that there was provided no regular instrumentality of government over Israel. In Samuel we find the priestly, prophetic and civil functions all combined in the one person of the priest, as an illustration of the mode of theocratic government originally intended for Israel.

And under Samuel things went well,—no complaint could be made. From his youth, "all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:20). No longer was "the word of the Lord—precious"; i. e., rare. No longer could it be said that "there was no open vision" (3:1). Through Samuel "the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord" (3:21). The ark of the covenant was reinstated, and spiritual conviction was so awakened that "all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord"

(7:1, 2). Samuel as High Priest seized the psychological hour for an effectual restoration of the penitent people to covenant relations with their heavenly King (7:3-9). The Redeemer interposed promptly and mightily to deliver Israel from existing oppression, and even from the further menace of the Philistines (10-13): "So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel; and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." This exhibited the ample provision of the theocracy for Israel's national security without reliance upon worldly resources; "And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites" (v. 14). "And Samuel judged [ruled] Israel all the days of his life" (v. 15). Samuel maintained his uprightness and ability all his many years. He was a worthy representative and instrument of the invisible Head; and his last appeal to Israel was to walk in unhesitating, consistent trust in that Head.

But, while the people could find no ground of dissatisfaction with the administration of Samuel, they affected to find ground for decisive demand for an earthly monarchy in the prospect of evil times to succeed under Samuel's sons. The record admits that Samuel's sons "walked not in his ways." There is no evidence, however, that it was out of abhorrence of evil, or out of true solicitude for the nation, that the people demanded of Samuel, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (8:5). We can clearly see that Israel's demand sprang from their wearying of not being politically "like all the nations."

Their real motive was eagerness to shake off the rule of their unseen King, and to renounce their calling as a "kingdom of priests." Their ambition was not to live for others, but like others. "They have rejected me that I should not reign over them" (v. 7), the Lord explains to Samuel. So, while the Lord directed Samuel to "hearken unto their voice," yet He commanded him to

“protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that [should] reign over them” (v. 9).

In having Samuel grant the people’s request, the Lord did not deliver the nation over to merited severance from Him as their King and to inevitable national perdition. On the contrary, He remembered that He was their Redeemer and Saviour, and that He was bound to bring them somehow, some time, to their national perfection of condition and service. He, therefore, simply adopted the new manner of government as His temporary expedient and agency, requiring henceforth obedience to the king as obedience to Himself. This basis was laid by a process in two stages.

God first offered to the people a man whom He knew would be their ideal in looking “upon the outward appearance.” Saul not only gave promise to Israel’s carnal view, but he even gave much promise at first from the spiritual standpoint. And God gave him through Samuel faithful instruction, every encouragement, and full opportunity to found a permanent house. But Saul proved utterly unworthy of being acknowledged by God as His chosen representative and as head of the new order. When inaugurating Saul, Samuel “told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord,” just as Moses had enjoined in Deut. 17: 14-20. And now the people’s choice stood self-condemned; their ideal lay in the dust.

Without consulting the people at all at first, God took timely steps to have “a man after His own heart” ready to step into the place. David, the son of Jesse, was this man. All are familiar with the way God pointed him out privately, prepared him by early occupation and by subsequent tribulation for the throne as His obedient servant and ardent lover; and how God brought it about for David to take the throne over his brethren by their pressing election and enthusiastic coronation (2 Sam. 5: 1-3).

Most wisely David chose for the capital of the united kingdom, not a city that, as an existing tribal center, might create tribal jealousies, but the mighty Jebusite fortress which had for four centuries maintained its independence defiantly in the very center of Israel's promised land. Thus Jerusalem became "the city of David," "the stronghold of Zion."

Although "David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel" (2 Sam. 5:12), "and the fame of David went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations" (2 Chron. 14:17), yet his steadfast anchorage in Christ, his supreme zeal for his greater and heavenly King, was manifested in his taking the promptest opportunity to install, with becoming national ceremony and enthusiasm, the sacred ark of the covenant in a tent which he prepared for it on Mt. Zion. Here the full Levitical order was inaugurated on a worthy scale, although the old Tabernacle, with its brazen altar, was left still at Kirjath-jearim. Thus David dedicated the kingdom under himself to the Messianic character and calling.

As soon as rest from all surrounding enemies permitted, David made proposal to proceed to the erection of a temple for Jehovah. This noble purpose of heart God appreciated and accepted; but He forbade its immediate execution as being inappropriate to him as a man of war. But God embraced the occasion of thus disappointing David for offering him a covenant to raise up the promised One from his seed, to sit upon his throne forever (1 Chron. 17). Thus the Messianic Covenant took on a further revelation, that of the promised Christ as King of Israel upon the throne of David. And as to the temple, God promised David a son and successor who, as a king of peace, should build the glorious house of God.

Most loyally and thankfully did David embrace this prospect; and he bent his energies, resources and devo-

tion to preparing vast stores of wealth for that sacred structure. He was truly the founder of the temple. Before his death he gathered the entire official strength of the nation to induct Solomon as his successor. At that time he presented out of his private fortune over ninety millions of gold of Ophir and of refined silver for the temple; "because," as he explained, "I have set my affection to the house of my God." He also turned over vast accumulations from the national treasury, which had been dedicated from the spoils of many conquests. Under the inspiration of the occasion, the assembled officials "offered willingly" to the amount of one hundred and fifty millions more, besides free-will offerings from the great general congregation.

More important still, David presented the pattern of the temple and of the whole temple-system. All this he had "by the Spirit." As he said, "All this . . . the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern" (1 Chron. 28:19). Solomon's temple, therefore,—the new, permanent and all-glorious palace of Israel's invisible King—was constructed on plans and specifications just as exactly according to Christ's directions as the Tabernacle before had been made. David established in advance the most elaborate and extensive organization of all classes of the temple ministries, as well as of the civil functionaries. Hence Solomon proceeded in due time to create that famous sanctuary as he "was instructed for the building of the house of God" (II Chron. 3:3), and the "house was finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it" (1 Kings 6:28).

Long years—while Israel was a wanderer in the wilderness, while Canaan was being acquired, and while the land was passing through the disorganized conditions of the Judges—Israel's King had condescended to occupy a movable pavilion, with no certain and fixed

location. He tented among His people throughout their unsettled times, covering about four hundred and fifty years; He humbly consented to go "from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another" (1 Chron. 17:5). Under David's reign Christ's habitation had found its permanent location,—that upon which He had had His eye from before His creation of the earth. Yet His habitation was still but a tent, in which was indeed the ark of His covenant; but the old Tabernacle still stood at Gibeon as "the tabernacle of the congregation of God," and the original brazen altar still stood before it. All this migratory, temporary order was now changed for that of a permanent and worthy residence, "exceeding magnificent," "of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (1 Chron. 22:5). Yet, while the erection, dedication and early use of the temple of the true and living God glorified the reign of Solomon, we are to attribute to David the conception of, and the very passion for, the house of the Most High. And as with David God made that covenant concerning the visible royal destiny of that Coming One, so through David chiefly came forth that great body of prophecy which belongs to our treatment of the Davidic period.

PROPHECY IN THE PSALMS OF DAVID.

It may strike some as strange to designate the Book of Psalms as a "great body of prophecy." But the purport of the Psalms is largely missed when its prominent prophetic element is not recognized and understood. It should be enough for us as a clew to this fact, that Jesus, while accompanying those two to Emmaus on that memorable Easter afternoon, "expounded unto them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning himself," and especially that, on that same evening, when He first appeared to the assembly of the Apostles, "he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that

all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and *in the Psalms* concerning me" (Luke 24:27, 44).

Of course, not all the Psalms were written by David; but his name is by common consent attached to the collection as a whole. And so we will include the Book of Psalms entire prophetically in the Davidic period.

That David was a prophet-king, and that he "speaketh concerning Him"—his Lord and coming son, the successor after the flesh to his throne—is effectually set forth in Acts 2:25-36;

"For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he himself saith, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

It is most important to note that the phrase "raise up Christ," in verse 30, means as the next verse shows, not to bring into human appearance, but *resurrect*. Death first is also implied. We learn here that when the Lord said to David (1 Chron. 17:11): "I will *raise up thy seed* after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will estab-

lish his kingdom," David knew that Christ—the eternal Son of God—incarnate as a human son of David, was to be qualified through bodily resurrection from the dead to sit forever on the throne of David. From this we take knowledge also that Christ could not receive the throne of David without death and resurrection first. It is plain, therefore, that He was not offering Himself while upon earth to the Jews to be enthroned as King. So there has been no "postponement of the kingdom," for Christ must have first suffered and been resurrected, yea, also "enter into his glory." It is only as a crucified and resurrected Son of Man descending in glory from above that Christ has any right, or any one has ever had Scriptural reason to expect Him, to assume the throne of David.

From the above passage we see, then, that the clearest testimony to the coming of Christ in the flesh—first to procure by His blood the remission of the sins of His people; then to be raised up from the grave to sit as Lord and Christ at God's right hand in the present high priestly intercession; finally to come again in triumph over all enemies to the throne of David and reign thereon Himself—is to be found in the Psalms of David.

We are also here given an important clew to the understanding of the prophetic element in the Psalms; namely, that David was wont to lose his own personality and consciousness in that of Christ, and to speak for Christ in the first person as His full and immediate representative. We may also add that often David lost his own personality in representation of the nation,—especially of the afflicted, penitent, trusting and finally restored remnant of Israel.

We must remember that the Psalms are Israelitish. As such they are very prominently national in tenor, and in many cases they are distinctly prophetic of the Messianic kingdom of the millennial age. But the natu-

ral and prophetic character of the Psalms does not rob them of spiritual value to us. On the contrary, we will suffer great loss in their spiritual value if we fail to take them in their natural sense. It must already have become apparent to the reader that we have little hold upon Scripture, if we have missed the prophetic highway running through it from Genesis down.

And as we have thus far found the prophetic perspective of Scripture to be simple, self-consistent and easily intelligible, so, while there is in the Psalms great increase in prophetic material, yet we will not be thrown into confusion by any great complication of the plot. We are merely to understand that through David the prophetic outlook comes to be projected from the standpoint of the Davidic throne, to which the Son of God should succeed upon coming visibly as the King of Israel.

We have already presented Psalm 98 (p. 41) as a good illustration of prophetic Psalms and of prophetic truth in the Psalms. Our quotation from the Acts gave us clear prophetic exposition of Psalms 16 and 110; and this instance illustrated the great help which New Testament exposition gives us in perceiving the true sense of the Psalms. We will now briefly consider a number of Psalms which furnish us with striking prophetic revelation.

Psalm 2. Verses 1-4 are referred in Acts 4:25-27 to the combined assault of civil and ecclesiastical authorities upon Jesus to accomplish His crucifixion. Verses 5-9 declare His triumph over the apparent success of His enemies, as He is resurrected to be appointed of God to come in vengeance and reign in Mt. Zion as King of Israel and sovereign over all Gentile powers. Verses 10-12 exhort these powers to reign now in His fear, lest at His return in sovereignty they be abolished from the earth.

Psalm 9. This represents Israel's final vindication

and deliverance from Gentile enemies,—especially from Anti-Christ, the Super-man (v. 19), the arch-enemy (v. 6)—when Jesus shall dwell in Mt. Zion as King (v. 11) and cause all nations to know how merely human they are before Him, the God and King of all (v. 20).

Psalm 10. This more distinctly portrays Jesus Christ's overthrow of the great final oppressor of Israel, the Anti-Christ,—“the man of the earth,” as he is called in distinction from the man who is “the Lord from heaven.”

Psalm 22. This Psalm is commonly recognized, under the light of New Testament application, as describing the passion of Jesus; but it describes with equally graphic force, in verses 22-31, the triumph and reward of the Crucified in His coming literal reign as King of the converted Jews and as Emperor over all nations (v. 28).

Psalm 24. Here is affirmed the right of the Son of God to rule the earth which He made; and description is given of the character of the remnant of Israel that shall constitute His people, and of His triumphant entry as King into the millennial Jerusalem, His earthly Capital.

Psalms 44-48. This group depicts successively the supplication of the final penitent remnant of outcast Israel for restoration (44); the beauty, glory and honor of their coming Deliverer and King (45); the terrors of the final great tribulation of Israel, Israel's wondrous deliverance by the God of Jacob, and the succeeding millennial reconstruction of the whole world by Jesus (46); the millennial rejoicing over Christ's reign (47); and the glory of Jerusalem under Christ's reign (48).

Psalms 65-67. Psalm 65 represents the happy spiritual and national conditions to be brought about through Christ's return to earthly Zion. Psalm 66 is the voice of the millennial remnant of Israel after coming through fiery trial, especially that of their great tribulation.

Psalm 67 most beautifully expresses the effectual supplication of the believing remnant; their exhortation to Israel to give praise, and to all nations to rejoice for Christ's reign; and the promise of material, as well as spiritual, blessing upon entering into the appropriate thanksgiving of the millennial age.

Psalm 72. This seems to have been David's last prayer, composed by inspiration for young King Solomon's use. It is a very comprehensive portrayal of the righteous, gracious, beneficent reign of Christ in the earth; and of Solomon's responsibility fittingly to typify that coming King and His reign.

Psalm 87 lauds earthly Zion as "the city of God," "His foundation," or earthly Capital, as it shall be seen in the millennial restoration.

Psalms 93-100. These Psalms constitute a majestic processional of kingdom-odes, which the reader can now quite easily see for himself relate prophetically to the inauguration of the reign of Christ on earth for Israel's joy and honor, and for the good and the gladness of all nations. Here, as in all the Psalms, it is to be remembered, that the Psalmist voices supplication and praise directly for the remnant of Israel which is to be saved for the kingdom, and that "the nations" mean the Gentile peoples in contrast with Israel.

Psalm 110. New Testament references present this clearly as a Psalm of Christ's ascension, and of His coming back from priestly intercession on high to execute vengeance upon the mightiest kings and nations that will be building and ruling contrary to Him and to the millennial order which He will establish.

Psalm 118 voices for the saved remnant of Israel the reward for trusting in Jehovah amidst the sorest tribulation, and it describes the great day of the Lord's coming to deliver His beleaguered people.

Psalms 146-150 constitute a final Hallelujah Chorus,

in view of Israel's millennial happiness, honor and prosperity through Christ their King.

Over thirty Psalms have been cited which are distinctively prophetic of the coming Messianic kingdom of Israel. The prophetic element in many others is traceable to the eye well accustomed to the light of "the blessed hope."

It was announced in the opening of this chapter that in the Davidic period would be included the reign of Solomon, when the kingdom still remained united and apparently commendable. While not immediately apparent, yet the prophetic element is probably not by any means wanting in the writings of Solomon, especially in the parabolical Proverbs and in the allegorical Canticles. These books especially portray by figures the King's bride. The climax of Proverbs is clearly the "virtuous woman" (31:11-31) who is suitable for the King. Under parabolical veiling the true Israel and the true church are fitly delineated.* Regarding the prophetic character of Canticles, there is to be found in this wondrous Song of Songs the portrayal, first, of a consecrated soul's loyal devotion to Christ in the life of present separation from the world,—pictured under the Shulamite's fidelity to her old pastoral lover—and, then, of the ecstatic bliss of union with Christ hereafter as the glorious King,—pictured under the proffers made to the Shulamite of Solomon's royal affection and favors.

*See the chapter on "The Bride of Christ in Parable," in the author's book, "The Mysteries of the Kingdom."

PART IV

Hebrew Prophecy—II. Isaiah to Malachi

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY—THE HEBREW PROPHETS.

BEFORE taking up the study of the Old Testament prophetic books—Isaiah to Malachi—we may appropriately devote a short chapter to the subject of the Hebrew prophets in general, in addition to what has already been said in Chapter Two of Part One.

A prophet is simply one who bears a message from God to man. It is a supernatural gift to have God's word entrusted to one; and it carries divine authority with it superseding all else, as it constitutes a "Thus saith the Lord."

Yet this is a very familiar and common function, at least where spiritual conditions favor or demand it. It is not to be limited to Old Testament times; it belongs integrally and prominently to the New Testament dispensation,—indeed, it is intended to be very common and regular in the Church. The preacher is a prophet, a messenger direct from God. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11).

But the subject calls for discrimination at various points.

Even prior to Israel's day God had His messengers, and many of them. We have already been treating of prophecy coming down from earlier days. But Enoch and Noah are not to be taken as very rare instances of God-sent messengers of earliest times. God was not leaving Himself anywhere or at any time without witnesses by word of mouth. Quite probably most of the names in the "sacred line" were more or less used of God prophetically, besides others of their days and generations. The Old Testament gives hints of such a fact.

So far as we can judge, Samuel first founded a regular and broad system of prophetic training, and he may be considered as the founder of the Hebrew prophethood. It was distressing to God that at any time His word should be "precious" (rare) in Israel, and that there should be "no open vision." So Samuel made provision for keeping the word of God in fresh and forceful communication in stated preaching and in active evangelism. Great names loom up before us subsequently in the record, as Elijah and Elisha.

These names excite a natural inquiry which calls for another discrimination. "Why did not such prophets as Elijah and Elisha leave writings?" The simplest answer would be that there could not have been in their messages anything of importance in God's view for after generations. Not because the "sermons" (?) of those prophets were not relatively worthy of being published. The simple fact is, that God could and did raise up other messengers for succeeding days.

We are still left, however, to find some special reason for written and transmitted prophecies which is not necessarily inherent in merely oral prophecies. We have already seen that the essential element in Scriptural prophecy is its predictive element. We, therefore, discriminate between prophecy which is purely didactic, monitory, or hortatory, and that which carries in it also the element of distinct, special prediction which, in God's mind, it is important to have handed down permanently in writing.

The former serves its end in dealing with immediate, living auditors under immediate, current conditions; God assumes perpetually to keep up the succession of such prophets as His voices and visible representatives for the hour. The latter, however, serves also for generations and times to come,—it not only concerns present duty, but it especially concerns coming events, which are of interest to all subsequent generations as well as to the contemporaneous generation.

Again, Hebrew prophecy, especially as founded by Samuel and as we meet with it in after-times, stands very specially related to the Hebrew monarchy, not only as being contemporaneous with it, but also as having a very important connection with it. It had always been very important for Israel to have the voices of the prophets continually in their ears. But when the monarchy was established, a peculiarly critical situation arose.

We have noted that God yielded to the popular demand for a visible king like to that of other nations. But God at the same time made a vast difference between Israel as a monarchy and other nations; between Israel's kings and those of other nations. He still held Israel under covenant as His peculiar people, and He required that Israel's king should represent Him as their invisible King who had not abdicated His throne over them, although He did consent to rule representatively. Moreover, the kings of the house of David were appointed to serve as types of the long-promised One,—the Son of God, the Christ—who should appear, not only as the Seed of the woman, and as the Seed of Abraham, but now preëminently as the Son of David and the coming successor to sit forever on His throne.

Yet this peculiar calling of the nation of Israel—especially of her kings—was ever in danger of being forsaken by them. Such a course meant more than ordinary spiritual declension,—it was a serious denial of Christ and apostasy from Him; it extinguished “the Light of the world.”

Hence, while absolute autocratic power usually attached to an ancient oriental monarch, the king of Israel was liable to be called to account by the prophet of God. By the latter Christ protested His own exclusive sovereignty, and He held the king to absolute accountability to Himself. David, the true head of the Hebrew monarchy,—the man after God's heart—loved

and, almost without exception, honored this representative position, and he ruled the nation in the loving fear of Christ. Not only that,—he was enthusiastic with Messianic anticipation; and, being a prophet himself, he penned, as we have seen, many a national ode for the temple use celebrating and graphically predicting his greater son—the Son of God—who should in due time honor and glorify the throne of Israel as David's everlasting successor. Therefore, David was the standard by which every succeeding king was strictly measured. Rarely did a later king measure up even nearly to this standard. But it was the prophet's business to support and encourage the king in following Christ, to admonish, censure or threaten him if he feared not Christ as did David.

The prophets, therefore, were God's messengers of instruction, reproof and exhortation, bidding the kingdom to respect and fulfill its calling as a kingdom of priests unto God in behalf of all nations. Such prophecy was hortatory in the nature of the case. It became increasingly monitory and threatening, as the kingdom fell into disunion, as the northern portion at once set a pace of determined apostasy from Christ, and as Judah even took less and less heed to the voices of the prophets and pulled off to the ways of heathen and idolatrous nations.

Nevertheless, the seed of Abraham must, according to God's covenant with Abraham, become the channel of blessing to all nations. And it was not first to Apostles that it was known that the seed of Abraham, by which this mission should be fulfilled, was to be, not the mere fleshly posterity, but that which should embody nationally the faith and righteousness of their forefather Abraham. God was calling all through Israel's history for such a people. But He never found in Israel what He required for the blessing of all nations. His covenant with Abraham, however, was irre-

vocable, His purpose could not be abandoned. Apparently frustrated, how could it be recovered and gloriously fulfilled?

Written Hebrew prophecy consists essentially of the revelation that through Christ, at His glorious appearing, such an obedient, righteous and serviceable Hebrew nation will be obtained for God's perfect use in fulfilling His gracious purpose for all mankind. Therefore, while in earlier centuries, as we have just seen, the prophets of Israel earnestly sought to hold the kings and the people to the high calling in the invisible Christ as their King, with the later centuries of the monarchy—when it was becoming more and more conclusive that the existing Israel was hopelessly unserviceable to God, and that a new Israel alone could serve God's purpose—predictive prophecy came into great prominence and furnished material for extensive writings which should be needed by after generations, and which, accordingly, have been handed down to us. The focus of all this body of prophetic writing is that Coming One,—the focus too of all Biblical prediction—who should come in all glory and power as the Messiah and King of that new earthly Israel and, as such, the King also of all kings, the Lord of all lords on earth.

We will find these prophecies running along certain great lines of perspective: 1. The chastisements of God upon His incorrigible Israel. 2. His use of Gentile instruments in inflicting these punishments. 3. The convergence of all such visitations upon one final, conclusive judgment of Israel through an unparalleled Gentile oppression, by which the old Israel as a corrupt and faithless mass will be destroyed for ever. 4. The timely rescue from the oppressor's destructive purpose of a holy remnant—purified through the fires of the "great tribulation"—by the personal and visible intervention of Israel's Messiah, who shall restore and reign over them as His chosen kingdom and make them pre-

eminent in the earth for the promised blessing to all nations.

There are sixteen prophetic books, which close the compilation of the Old Testament in our English Bible. These are usually classified as four Major Prophets,—Isaiah to Daniel, and twelve Minor Prophets,—Hosea to Malachi. This is a purely literary order and classification, but it works well in a progressive study.

It is of extreme importance to recognize the historical origin and the political character of these books; because it is only in the light of the historical occasion and of the political reference of any prophetic book that its messages can be readily and rightly comprehended. Historically, the various books arose in the three periods prior to, during, and subsequent to, the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. But not only is it important to notice to which one of these periods a given book belongs; it is even more important to read each book in the light of the history of its exact and limited epoch as it is indicated generally in the opening verse or verses of the book. Politically the various books of the prophets deal, either with the apostatizing kingdom of Israel,—the Ten Tribes; or with the decaying, the tottering kingdom of Judah; or with the Israel of the last days and of the millennial age; or with the Gentile nations, ancient or future, as contemporary with and vitally related to the children of Israel. The Church is not known or dealt with in Hebrew prophecy.

If the prophets are read in a natural, literary way as they are conveyed to us,—carefully scrutinizing the historical origin and the political references of each message—they will be found by us to be, for the most part, readily intelligible, highly quickening to the mind and spirit, and of the greatest practical value to us in understanding the purposes and ways of God in Christ, and in qualifying us intelligently to coöperate therewith in our own day and generation.

Inasmuch as dates are not given according to the civil calendar, but in terms taken from the reigns of the various kings, we have to construct our own chronology in calendar years by reckoning from some known points backward and forward along the succession of the kings. We take for such reckoning-points the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 587; the beginning of the Babylonian captivity in B. C. 606, or its close in B. C. 536. Of course such reckoning is not quite exact, but it answers the purpose.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

WE ARE introduced to this great book by the very explicit guiding superscription: "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."

From the history given us in Second Kings and Second Chronicles, we learn that the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz covered thirty-two years. From tradition we know that Isaiah prophesied considerably beyond Hezekiah's entire reign of twenty-nine years. In all, then, we may reckon a span of nearly seventy years for Isaiah's career as a prophet.

At 6:1, we are located on the threshold of Jotham's reign of sixteen years,—B. C. 758-42. Again at 7:1, we are located early in Ahaz's reign of sixteen years (B. C. 742-26). There is, then, a gap of over sixteen years—so far as writing is concerned—between Chapters 6 and 7. At 10:5, we are abruptly introduced to a period lying between the fall of the northern kingdom (see v. 11)—B. C. 721—and the Assyrian invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in B. C. 713. Hence, another gap of prophetic silence, twenty to twenty-five years in length, lies between 10:4 and 5. This invasion of Sennacherib is the center about which interest revolves more or less directly from 10:5 to 39:8. In Chapters 40-66 there are no dates drawn from current history.

Thus we find in this book a very definite and orderly, though simple, main outline, as follows:

I. Chapters 1-5, springing out of the depressing period of Uzziah's latter years when "he was a leperand dwelt in a several house" (2 Kings 15:2).

II. Chapter 6, introduced at once upon Jotham's accession and staged upon the mournful and significant background of Uzziah's recent burial—"in the field," instead of in "the sepulchres of the kings" as usual; "for they said, He is a leper" (2 Chron. 26:23).

III. Chapters 7:1-10:4,—sixteen years or more later—revolving about the crisis of the confederated invasion of Judah by the kingdoms of Israel and Syria early in Ahaz's reign.

IV. Chapters 10:5-39:8, occasioned by the extreme crisis of Sennacherib's invasion and of Hezekiah's miracle of healing, about B. C. 713-10.

V. Chapters 40-66, the Apocalypse of Isaiah, related, not to current epochs, but to far distant future ones.

The superscription indicates that, widely separated in time of utterance and diversified as to immediate occasion as the many messages of Isaiah were, yet there is such organic unification of all about some common focus, as to embrace all in one composite vision,—“The Vision of Isaiah.”

It is also indicated that all is to be read in literal application to Judah and Jerusalem. This holds our understanding to a very definite, exclusive and familiar subject. It rivets our gaze historically upon unworthy Judah and Jerusalem of the past, while “the vision” lifts our eyes to literal Judah and Jerusalem as they shall be when the vision is fulfilled.

I. THE DAYS OF UZZIAH, CHAPTERS 1-5.

The opening of Chapter 2 with a repetition of the title of the book indicates that Chapter 1 is to be taken as the preface to the book. A preface should strike the key-notes of a production. In this chapter, accordingly, we find as key-notes of the book the following:

1. Verses 2-4, Christ's charge against Judah and Jerusalem for unnatural despoil toward Him.

2. Verses 5-9, His despair of good results from further

divine chastening. In verses 5, 6 the leprous state of king Uzziah is employed to describe the putrid moral condition of the nation.

3. Verses 10-15, Christ's contempt for the prevalent hollow religious forms of the people.

4. Verses 16-20, one more intense, persuasive invitation to obedience, coupled with startling warning against disobedience.

5. Verses 21-31, Christ, staggering back in foresight of their utter coming apostasy, solves the problem of accomplishing His purpose with His people by forecasting a final effectual purgation of the nation, through unsparing fires of punishment, until Zion, "redeemed with judgment" (v. 27), shall be made worthy to be called "The city of righteousness, the faithful city" (v. 26).

Chapters 2-5 first boldly portray (2:2-4) the coming age, when all nations shall resort to Jerusalem, there to receive from Christ Himself the laws of righteousness and peace. Then the prophet vividly describes (2:6-4:1) through what judgments for grossest iniquities and pride the way must be prepared for the happy estate (4:2-6) of the "escaped of Israel," "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," and when Jesus Christ shall overshadow Jerusalem with a pavilion of His glory.

Chapter 5 forcibly presents God's reasons for such judgment and the use He will make of the Gentile nations in administering the same.

II. THE DAYS OF JOTHAM, CHAPTER 6.

Here the profane state of Judah—just emphasized by the dishonorable burial of her leprous king who had committed gross sacrilege against Christ—is appallingly exposed to the prophet's view under the personal revelation, in heavenly glory and power, of Christ their King,

as He ever was in invisible presence in their midst, and as He is destined in due time to appear bodily to reign over them.

With new cleansing and anointing Isaiah is commissioned to a prophetic ministry to this people, which will only render them the more insensate and ripe for those subsequent exhaustive processes of purging judgment, out of which shall be saved finally from the mass of the nation only that "holy seed [which] shall be the substance thereof" (v. 13).

III. THE DAYS OF AHAZ, CHAPTERS 7 TO 10: 4.

After some sixteen or eighteen years of prophetic silence so far as further writing appears, Isaiah here introduces the critical time when Judah and Jerusalem were terribly scourged by an invasion of Syria and Israel united in a confederation which purposed to supplant the house of David (7:1-6). See 2 Chron, 28: 1-15. The prophet gave Ahaz assurance of present escape (v. 7), although warning him that for his refusal to trust in Christ, a far heavier blow should come somewhat later from an invasion by Assyria (v. 17).

The section gives large room to prediction of the overthrow of both Syria and Israel (7:3-9; 8:1-7), especially of Israel (9:8-10:4); yet the focus of Chapters 7 and 8 is fixed upon the invisibly present Deliverer of the remnant of Judah in both invasions; namely, Christ, here alone in all the Old Testament called "Immanuel," meaning "God with us" (7:14; 8:8, 10), the name specially predictive of and appropriate to His coming as God in the flesh by virgin birth.

Then, in 9:1-7, this invisible Immanuel is predicted to appear, first, in His first advent (vs. 1, 2), to give light—by His teachings and miracles—to the beshrouded regions of the old kingdom of Israel; and then, in His second advent (vs. 3-7), as the Deliverer from "the yoke . . . , the staff . . . , the rod of his [Israel's] oppres-

sor,"—the Anti-Christ—and as the final Restorer and Ruler of Israel: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

IV. THE DAYS OF HEZEKIAH, 10:5 TO CHAPTER 39.

While Chapters 40-66 belong to Hezekiah's days, yet, inasmuch as they constitute a section of purely apocalyptic prophecy—not related to current events of the prophet's time,—that section will remain reserved for a distinct place in the general outline of the book.

This division embraces several well-defined sections.

1. Chapters 10:5-12:6. The "Assyrian"—as the "rod" of Christ's "anger" "against an hypocritical nation," Judah and Jerusalem (10:12)—is abruptly introduced (vs. 5, 6) at a time subsequent to Assyria's overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, B. C. 721 (v. 11). This proves that the historical occasion was Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, B. C. 713. See 2 Chron. 32:9-22. God's purpose in this was to turn a saved remnant of Judah back from leaning upon worldly help to Himself (vs. 20-25), when He would show His might in destroying the invader (vs. 26, 27). Upon this background the prophet, in magnificent panorama, unfolds in Chapters 11, 12 the coming of the same Deliverer, Christ, as the "Branch" "out of the stem of Jesse" (11:1) to "smite the earth with the rod of His mouth," and "with the breath of His lips . . . slay the wicked" (11:4), and to lead "the poor" and "the meek" remnant of His Israel, in their recovery "the second time"

(11:11), into their promised place of glory and eminence in the earth (Chapter 12).

2. Chapters 13-23. These chapters are found to constitute a group of judgments predicted upon contemporaneous Gentile nations, because of their wicked spirit shown toward God's people when, as in Sennacherib's case, they were only being used of God for the chastisement of His own unfaithful people. These cases illustrate God's habit of giving to Gentile enemies ascendancy over Israel in times of great declension, in order, after a due measure of purging, to release and to restore the penitent remnant through judgment upon their enemies and oppressors.

3. Chapters 24-27. Here are four successive pictures of God's final judgment and restoration of His covenant people.

4. Chapters 28-31. Here is a case of God's intense jealousy against Israel because of their strong defection—especially under the leadership of influential princely classes—from faith in God to reliance upon Egypt in the time of the crisis when Sennacherib was overrunning the kingdom.

5. Chapters 32-35. Here is a concluding panorama of Israel's final scourging from the hand of Christ, His timely judgment upon their spoilers, and His regathering of the "weak" and "feeble" remnant, with "songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (Chapter 35), when He shall come to take charge over them as their "Judge.....Lawgiver.....King" (33:22).

6. Chapters 36-39. These chapters give a narrative of the thrilling incidents of the crisis which in the previous chapters formed the basis of prophecy. Sennacherib's invasion of Judah and his destruction are here recorded in exact fulfilment of predicted details. This illustrates the literalness with which all prophetic predictions are to be taken. The fatal sickness of Hezekiah and his miraculous healing in the midst of the

national crisis intensified the sharp alternation from imminent catastrophe to exhilarating victory. But these chapters serve, not only as an appendix to the previous sections of this division, but also as a link between the two main parts of Isaiah.

V. THE APOCALYPSE OF ISAIAH, CHAPTERS 40-66; RELATED NOT TO CURRENT EPOCHS, BUT TO FAR DISTANT FUTURE ONES.

The first part of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39, is hortatory, monitory, even denunciatory. Its messages spring out of current conditions and are to be understood only in the light of those conditions as found recorded in proper place in the books of Kings and Chronicles. But Chapter 39 closes with prediction—positive and final—of the removal of Judah into Babylonian exile. This sounds long in advance the death-knell of the kingdom of Judah; and it immediately causes an entire change in prophetic standpoint and tone.

As to standpoint, the prophet no longer links messages to current conditions and crises. No longer are his messages dated from the reigning kings or made intelligible by recorded contemporaneous history. But the prophet speaks as though standing in far distant times and situations. These we must discern as clearly as if we were reading historical records, or the messages are unintelligible and left to conjectural, fanciful "interpretation." This is purely apocalyptic prophecy.

As to tone, denunciations are now abandoned for consolations. The former belonged to the rebellious nation growing in obduracy. But, now that the verdict of judgment is prophetically issued and the nation viewed as already in exile, consolation is needed for a penitent, prayerful and trusting remnant in the midst of judgment.

In scanning Chapters 40-66, we are first arrested by a literary division of these twenty-seven consolatory

chapters into three equal sections, marked by the recurrence of a culminating pronouncement of exclusion of the wicked from the predicted consolation. See 48:22, 57:21, 66:24. This directs us to take up the subject matter in three equal portions.

1. Chapters 40-48. In reading into this section, we soon find the promise of restoration from Babylonian exile to be the cup of consolation immediately offered to Christ's little flock. The bountiful comfort extended to God's chastened people (40:1, 2), consisting in their return "to the cities of Judah" (vs. 9-11), comes to be plainly disclosed (43:14) as a redemption through mighty Babylon's overthrow. Even the name of the human instrument of that deliverance, Cyrus the Great, is boldly declared (44:28-45:13) one hundred and seventy-five years in advance; and the proclamation of release is issued to the trembling exiles (48:20) as if the hour had arrived.

The tremendous convulsion involved in this divine drama of wresting imperial sway from proud Babylon for Israel's sake is made the standpoint from which the triumphant advent of Christ is projected in this section; but, so great was the apparent consolation of this restoration to the little flock of God, that the Messianic outlook is not very prominent. But, oh, how relatively disappointing, how relatively evanescent was the consolation which the pious Jews actually derived from their return from Babylonian exile. Surely, a new preparation needs to be forthwith poured into the cup of divine consolation.

2. Chapters 49-57. In reading this group of chapters, we find not one scintilla further of reference to the epoch just thrown upon the screen. That great drama and its consolation are left far behind. It is an entirely new situation from which the prophet now speaks. The clew is found in the prominence of One called the Lord's "Servant" (49:3, 5, 6, 7; 52:13), His rejection by

His own people (49:7; 50:2, 6; 53:3), His failure to regather and restore them (49:4, 5), His atoning death for them (53:4-6). The standpoint is that of Christ's first advent. For this "consolation of Israel" the pious Jews, like Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25, 37, 38), longingly waited through more than five centuries.

But how disappointing still is the consolation, as in humiliation—despised and rejected—He crosses to a shameful death the stage of His brief career, leaving an incorrigible nation gloating over His blood! With great radiance shines forth on this mournful background the glowing light of His reappearing to accomplish what was to be vainly hoped for in His first advent—the restoration of Israel to everlasting glory in the earth. Extended passages may be cited, as 49:5-26; 51:11-52; 54:1-17. A sample of the already familiar, but always fresh, perspective is found in 49:5-7: "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he saith, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation [Israel] abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee."

Let us pause to give special attention to a section of this division, which is of the most sacred interest and which remarkably illustrates the way in which in this division the first advent of Jesus Christ constitutes apocalyptically the historical basis for projecting His return to glory.

In 52:13-15 Jesus is predicted, from the standpoint

of His advent in astonishing humiliation, to return in exaltation to the dismay of highest earthly powers. The humiliation of His first advent is then described in full (53:1-3), the mystery of it is explained to lie in His expiatory sufferings for our physical ills, our transgressions and our racial depravity (vs. 4-6), His personal innocence and purely substitutionary suffering of judgment is expounded (vs. 7-9), and on this background His future reward is again vividly outlined (vs. 10-12), forming the introduction to the extensive prophecy of millennial restoration pictured in Chapters 54, 55.

3. Chapters 58-66. In this section consolation overflowing, intoxicating, infectious is poured into Israel's cup. No! not the old Israel's cup; her cup is bitter, and it must be drunk to the dregs. The Lord, no more as "Servant," but as Judge now comes to view, executing final, exhaustive punishment upon rebellious Israel. Christ describes them as "a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face" while yet saying to all, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." "Therefore," says their offended Lord, "I will number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: . . . And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen, for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name" (65:3, 5, 12, 15). But, while Christ's aspect is now with "garments of vengeance for clothing," to "repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies," yet it is also as "the Redeemer . . . come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgressions in Jacob" (59:17, 18, 20). While it means the end forever of a stiffnecked Israel, Lo! it means a new Israel, "a nation . . . born at once," "in one day" (66:8), "all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (60:21). While executing final judg-

ment upon old degenerate Israel and old faithless Jerusalem by the hand of Gentile enemies, the Lord is here seen as the avenger and deliverer of the penitent and believing remnant, whom He redeems by swift destruction upon the greedy. "For, behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire" (66:15). But, "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (65:18, 19).

It is that long-promised consummation, when the saved of Israel shall be called "The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord," and Jerusalem "shall be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken," "The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (62:12, 60:14); the time when "their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed" (61:9); when "the Gentiles shall see thy [Israel's] righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name"; when "Thou [Israel] shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" (62:2, 3); the time when the new nation of Israel shall fulfill the calling given her in the Mosaic Covenant (Ex. 19:6) in being "named the Priests of the Lord, . . . the Ministers of our God" (61:6): the time when "men may bring unto thee [Israel] the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee [Israel] shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (60:11, 12); the time when penitent "Gentiles shall come to thy [Israel's] Light [Jesus], and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (60:3); the time when shall be fulfilled

among Gentiles this word: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: and rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.....And I also will take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord" (66: 10, 11, 21); the time, in fine, when the cup of consolation to Israel shall overflow: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you: and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (66:13).

This is, then, "The Vision of Isaiah." It is a unity, orderly and clear, though compound and so comprehensive. Its focus is definite and plain,—it is familiar already; it is the focus of all Hebrew prophecy,—the coming imperishable kingdom of Israel under the returning, glorified Jesus, the Christ of the Old Testament, the Son of God, Israel's Messiah.

CHAPTER III.

JEREMIAH AND EZEKIEL.

JEREMIAH locates the period of his prophetic ministry with chronological exactness; namely, from the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign, through Jehoiakim's reign and that of Zedekiah, down to the very downfall of Judah and Jerusalem in 587 B. C., a period of somewhat over forty years in all.

The "thirteenth year" of Josiah's reign was a psychological juncture for the appearing of the "Weeping Prophet." Josiah came to the throne of Judah as a lad of eight years, after the nation had suffered an unparalleled religious eclipse of over a half-century. At sixteen the boy-king began to seek God after the standard of his ancestor David. Four years the young king thus spent; and although, as the story in 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chron. 34 shows, there was no copy of the Scriptures known to be left in all the land for his enlightenment,* yet this young monarch stepped forth to undertake the most heroic task of religious reformation known to history. Throwing a remarkable personal zeal into his cause, and having royal authority to enforce the honor of Jehovah, he soon had a magnificent campaign of iconoclasm in full swing.

In the second year of this brilliant restorative work, another young man—Jeremiah—took hold in the cause. But, strange to say, the prophet had no word of congratulation or approval from God for Judah. Spiritually speaking Judah was only masquerading in pretended reformation, and Jeremiah had the painful task of tearing off the mask of hypocritical repentance and consecra-

* It is highly probable that the prophet Zephaniah was Josiah's spiritual mentor.

tion. For eighteen years—until Josiah's untimely and tragic death—Jeremiah exposed the mockery of this pretended fealty to Jehovah.

Josiah was six years in sweeping the land apparently clear of idols and in renewing the temple and its rites after a worthy fashion. But just when the populace was almost delirious with professed religious joy, and "The Temple of the Lord" was upon every one's lips, God sent Jeremiah to stand in the very gate of the temple and cry, "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord... Will ye steal, murder and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name?" (7: 4, 9, 10). And Jeremiah was commanded, "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee" (v. 16).

Again, one of the most notable occasions of Josiah's reign was when—after a copy of the law of Moses had come to light in the rubbish that was being taken out of the temple which Manasseh and Amon had long kept closed up—the king, in holy fear of the judgment of God which the law showed was overhanging his kingdom, assembled the nation and swore them solemnly to repent and keep the commandments of Moses. Soon afterwards the Lord commanded Jeremiah, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them" (11: 6). But it is soon added, "And the Lord said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I have

made with their fathers" (v. 11). So stung were the people by the prophet's words that they commanded him, "Prophecy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand" (v. 21).

After Josiah's tragic death Jeremiah, though broken-hearted, had to go forward—now without royal favor—for twenty-two years more, warning, weeping, suffering, hounded, while the nation, in a revelry of idolatry, crime and disloyalty to Christ, reeled gaily and staggered hopelessly on to its ruin.

In Chapters 1-38, we find as many as thirty-one addresses,—nearly all dated exactly from the reigns of the kings already mentioned and springing out of immediate familiar circumstances, many of them addressed straight to the kings themselves. They uniformly press the warning of the impending crash and almost frantically seek to secure at least some mitigation of doom by getting the people to give tardy heed to the divine counsel.

Chapters 39-45 are largely narrative, recounting the irruption of the doomed Capital, the stirring after-events which ended in the flight into Egypt of the remnant left in the land after the captivity, and the fearful maledictions of Jeremiah upon the same for their disobedience in taking this course and for obstinate idolatries.

But while Jeremiah was ordained as a prophet "against the whole land,—against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land" (1:18), yet his call was preëminently as "a prophet unto the nations" (Gentile): "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (1:10). By him God had (27:1-11) sent out word, twenty years before Judah fell, to all contemporaneous Gentile nations which had been under the sway of Assyria to submit themselves to Nebuchadnezzar, the new world-conqueror: "I have given all these lands into

the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of the land come: And it shall come to pass, that the nation and the kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the King of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord" (vs. 6-8, 11).

Also in Chapter 25 God had charged Jeremiah thus: "Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Ye shall certainly drink. For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts" (vs. 15, 16, 27-29). This described the world-wide war-madness and deluge of blood which by God's decree attended the conquest of the mighty Babylon.

Now, Chapters 46-51 give more extended portrayals of the inflictions that were to come upon the contemporary Gentile nations, partly because of wicked conduct toward Israel, and partly because it was to be the day of God's infrequent visitation for wickedness in general.

Especially thrilling are Chapters 46, against Egypt, and 50 and 51, predicting the stupenduous event of Babylon's overthrow for the release of God's captives.

Chapter 52 is an historical appendix to the book from another hand, in which the harrowing tale of Jerusalem's fall is told again. The Lamentations following contain the exhaustive outpouring of Jeremiah's crushing grief over the tragedy which he had so long sought to avert or to mitigate. Do we see in this dirge only Jeremiah's grief? Ah, he was only the vessel for the expression of Christ's grief over His faithless nation. It reminds us of His lament centuries later over the Jerusalem which heaped upon Him a still more wicked rejection: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23: 37-39).

Even so, there is a "till" in Jeremiah, a happy, though very distant, prospect. Otherwise, we probably would not have had the book handed down to us at all. For, while the immediate situation underlying each of the prophet's messages is usually so urgent that prediction, reaching beyond the immediate prospective calamity, is generally wanting, yet, in Chapters 30-33, occasion is taken from these very times to unfold in intense colors the drama of the last days, with which we have already become somewhat familiar.

This panorama includes a succession of striking scenes:

1. A far worse final tragedy to befall hardened and obdurate Israel of the last days: "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (30: 7).
2. A final revenge to be taken upon Israel's last, most

formidable and merciless Gentile enemies: "For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him" (v. 8). 3. A final salvation of a penitent remnant: "At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. . . . For thus saith the Lord: Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel" (31: 1, 7). 4. A final general re-gathering of "scattered Israel": "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, . . . a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them: . . . for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock (vs. 8-10). 5. A final universal condition of righteousness among this saved Israel: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (vs. 31-34). 6. A

final rebuilding of reclaimed Israel, both materially and spiritually: "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me: and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (33:6-8).

It is all summed up in language that is in strictest harmony with all foregoing prophecy: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah" (33:14). "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it" (33:9).

EZEKIEL.

This prophet is equally particular with Isaiah and Jeremiah to link his messages with current chronology. His dates are reckoned from "King Jehoiachin's captivity" (1:2). Nebuchadnezzar took away the Jews in several deportations. The first was in the third year of Jehoiakim, B. C. 606. It was not until 587 B. C. that Jerusalem was finally destroyed and the remnant removed. But eleven years before, Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's son and successor, after a reign of only one hundred days, was taken away with all his household and the substantial classes of the kingdom. Ezekiel was included in the number. His messages were given from the place of their captivity "by the river Chebar," beginning, it would seem, when he was thirty years of age, the time when he would have entered at home upon the duties of the priesthood.

The book divides into exact halves of twenty-four chapters each.

The first half of the book embraces three sections consisting of messages, or groups of messages, and corresponding to three dates (1:2, 8:1 and 20:1) which cover just four and one-half years immediately prior to the beginning of the final siege of Jerusalem, and a chapter (24) dated the day the siege began, which event was supernaturally revealed to Ezekiel, (24: 1, 2). The siege lasted just eighteen months less one day; and it was shown to Ezekiel (24:26, 27) that he was to be dumb to his people until the day when a refugee from Jerusalem should inform him of the city's destruction. From 33:21, 22 it is learned that it was three years less five days when this messenger appeared before Ezekiel in the place of captivity. The intervening chapters, 25-32, contain messages, all but one of which were given to Ezekiel during this interval,—messages of dire judgments to befall the contemporaneous Gentile nations (especially Egypt and Tyre) through Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of the imperial earth. With Chapter 33 as an introduction, the rest of the book, Chapters 34-48, portrays by a series of messages in regular progression the panorama of the last days ending in the millennial restoration of Israel.

In 1:1 Ezekiel records that "the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God"; and the book opens with the unique revelation to Ezekiel of "The glory of the Lord." This means the glory manifestation of Israel's yet invisible King, Christ the Son of God. It is to be associated with the vision of Christ given to Isaiah (Isa. 6; see John 12:41). It was out from this glory-source that Ezekiel received his commission (1:28-3:27); and, as he was swept away to his place of testimony among the captives by Chebar, he heard behind him "a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place" (3:12). After seven days of sitting

spellbound among the exiles, Ezekiel was called out into a plain and there beheld again the vision of the Lord in His glory.

The focus of interest in the first half of the book of Ezekiel is really the remarkable actions of this manifestation of "the glory of the God of Israel" in relation to the temple and the city of Jerusalem. In the second message, or group of messages, the Lord in this glory-manifestation takes the prophet with Him on a tour of inspection into the abominations that were being practised in Jerusalem (8:4). Then the prophet is shown the solemn act of the sealing of a pious remnant of the inhabitants of the city (9:3), and of the preparing of fiery coals of judgment to be scattered over the doomed city (10:4, 15). He is then shown the reluctant rising of the glorious Lord for departure from His place in the Holy of Holies (10:18, 19), and then His final withdrawal from the holy city itself (11:22, 23) to leave it to its destruction. Thenceforth the Lord's position in relation to His people was to be as expressed in the words of 11:16: "Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come."

Now clearly, the real focus of the last half of the book is the return of the glory of the Lord to Jerusalem and to the millennial temple,—not in invisible presence, to be apprehended only in "visions of God," but in personal, visible, human appearance, when the God of Israel shall appear in the person of the returning glorified Jesus. This is foreshown to us in 43:1-9:

"Afterward he brought me to the gate even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to

destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places. In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever."

Such was the overwhelming interest belonging to the critical epoch of overhanging calamity, that the predictions of the last days are scarce in the first half of Ezekiel. Yet Israel's final restoration is vividly described in spiritual aspect, in 11: 16-21 and in 16: 60-63, as the fulfillment of God's everlasting covenant, and, in 20: 33-44, as a final gathering of all who shall be left after the thorough purging of Israel by their final and extreme tribulation. We quote 20: 33, 34, 38, 40, 42:

"As I live, saith the Lord, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out . . . And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. . . . For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them and there will I require your offerings, and the first fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things . . . And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land

of Israel, into the country for which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers."

In the chapters of judgment upon the Gentile nations the final restoration of Israel is held up to view but once, and then in most appropriate language:

"And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord God. Thus saith the Lord God: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen [Gentiles], then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards: yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them: and they shall know that I am the Lord their God" (28: 24-26).

After the prophet's mouth was reopened to his people, a marvellous panorama of the last days and of the millennial order was unfolded, which is recorded for us in Chapters 34-48. Much information is here exclusively revealed, and great expansion is given to main facts previously predicted.

Chapter 34 beautifully sets forth God's purpose to restore His holy flock—the purified Israel—under the Messiah as a faithful Shepherd, the anti-type of David. Chapter 35 predicts the final overthrow of Seir for "perpetual hatred" of Israel and for shedding their blood by the sword in the time of their last great calamity and tribulation. In Chapter 36 the physical rejuvenation of Palestine for occupancy by regathered and sanctified Israel is described in detail. Verse 8 is today being fulfilled in some measure. "But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel: for they are at hand to come." In Chapter 37 is strikingly outlined a like resurrection of scattered, denationalized, despairing Israel, to be a new, vigorous and lastingly united nation under Messiah

their King, the anti-type of David: "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever, and my servant David shall be their prince for ever" (v. 25). We are witnessing to-day in a most striking way, the advancing stages of this parable of Jewish national reawakening, reorganizing and regathering,—only altogether in the stages preceding the final spiritual regeneration. Chapters 38, 39 graphically portray in rich detail the mustering and the descent upon Palestine of the vast international hosts under Antichrist,—as God's implement of inflicting upon Israel the great and conclusive tribulation—and the destruction of five-sixths of this host in their tracks upon the mountains of Israel. This occasion is denoted as the fulfillment of long-standing prophecies (38:17, 39:8). The vast extent of the destruction of invading hosts is indicated by the fact that Israel will be able to supply themselves with firewood from the weapons of their enemies for seven years while the trees of the land are being allowed to grow up again (vs. 9, 10); and that it will engage all the population seven months to bury the skeletons of their enemies, besides the great labor afterwards of special appointees in thoroughly cleansing the land (vs. 11-16). And it is shown that in spite of all the corpses, a pestilence will be averted by the immediate and swift work of numberless fowls and beasts specially summoned by God-given instinct (vs. 17-22).

The significance of all the foregoing is summed up in 39: 23-29:

"And the heathen [Gentiles] shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so they fell all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them. There-

fore thus saith the Lord God: Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid [i. e., during the time of renewed statehood while still impenitent prior to their last tribulation]. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations: then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen [Gentile nations]: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there [in dispersion]. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God."

Chapters 40-46 give detailed plans and specifications, with rites of sacrifice and of worship, of the millennial temple, which shall be built for and sanctified by the triumphal entry in heavenly glory of the Messiah who was rejected from the old "Second Temple" on that Palm Sabbath nineteen hundred years ago. Chapters 47, 48 describe the following features of the millennial order:

1. That "river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Psa. 46: 4), a river issuing from under the threshold of the temple and, while without affluents, yet flowing on in rapidly increasing volume, imparting healing and fruitfulness and abundance of finny life even throughout that horrible chasm of the Dead Sea (47: 1-12).

2. The rebounding of the full millennial land of Israel, apparently embracing, as was shown on pp. 95-97, nearly all the territory from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, and from the Red Sea to the Euphrates (47: 13-21).

3. The partitioning of this vast area to the tribes of Israel. It appears that these partitions will run in great strips from west to east, with the "holy oblation" of territory right in the midst, which is to be reserved

for the millennial Temple and City, for Priests, for Levites, and for the Prince (47:22-48:29).

4. The Holy City itself, the "new name" of which shall be derived from the fact of the presence of the glorified and reigning Jesus; namely, "Jehovah-Shammah," meaning, "The Lord is There" (48:30-35). (See map of Millennial Holy Land, p. 98.)

It must be apparent to all that Jeremiah and Ezekiel have a special relationship to one another, as might be expected from the fact that they synchronize as to the crucial epoch of the downfall of Jerusalem. But, while Jeremiah bewails the tragedy of the fall of the former Jerusalem, Ezekiel—on the background of the accursed Jerusalem—depicts the glory of that coming Jerusalem which is to be just as literal, geographically and politically, as the other, and which is to be "a rejoicing, and her people a joy," "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations."

Furthermore, that no Scripture is more centered in Christ personally, in His glory and excellence, than the Book of Ezekiel, will be apparent when one notices that the end of all its remarkable disclosures is, as is expressed probably more than a half-hundred times, "That ye [or they] may know that I am the Lord." This might be called the "sign manual" of Christ to this book, and it makes its contents—in every detail and in literal meaning—of intensest interest to all who honor and adore Him.

With the great addition to the body of Scriptural prophecy contributed by Ezekiel, we find ourselves simply farther along on a great highway cast up in the eternal councils of the Trinity, which affords a plain and substantial track for the humble wayfaring man who seeks to trace God's purpose in Christ from the fall of mankind to its final restoration. Does not every step of progress confirm the Bible reader that he is right in that "path of light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

AN initial reading of this book will impress an attentive student with the striking fact that the author carefully connects his writing, both as a whole and in its several revelations, with definite chronological and historical positions. This fact calls the reader to take up the book, or any given section of it, in the light of the particular situation corresponding to the attached date.

INTRODUCTORY.

The first chapter is evidently introductory, and verses 1 and 21 furnish the dates which span Daniel's entire official career in Babylon. The termini are "the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah" (606 B. C.), and "the first year of King Cyrus," 536 B. C. This at once reveals to us the unique historical and dispensational setting of Daniel's public career. His participation in court affairs at Babylon exactly spanned the seventy years' "Babylonian Captivity" of the Jews; and that period was, at the same time, the first momentous stage of the yet unexpired "Times of the Gentiles," or of the long ages of Gentile supremacy over Israel.

A little reflection will suffice to impress any one with the weighty significance which the dispensational reversal just mentioned was designed to present to the mind, whether of a pious Jew or of a thoughtful Gentile. To the former it meant not only the loss of national liberty and dignity, but also the arrest, if not the possible defeat, of Messianic progress; while to the latter it meant the unquestionable inferiority of Jehovah to Babylonian divinities.

It did not need to be explained that, in view of such considerations, Daniel's life, as a pious Hebrew patriot of this particular period and position, was absorbed with the problem of the restoration of the kingdom to the saints of Israel.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

The second chapter, which contains the first great revelation, is dated in "the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar," 603 B. C. This was, of course, in the very morning of the period of the Jewish captivity and of the great dispensational transition; and Nebuchadnezzar was the young and ambitious monarch by whom this momentous change of times had been brought about. Most appropriately, therefore, was this dream given to him, to acquaint him with the "secret" of God's purpose concerning an ultimate dispensational reversion. Daniel emphasizes this aim of the dream in his foreword to the king: "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.... what should come to pass thereafter..... He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass" (vs. 28, 29).

The expression "in the latter days" focuses the dream and its intended disclosure upon the close of the dispensation which was then in its first days; this is significantly expressed by the word "hereafter," or as it is translated in the margin, "after this"; i. e., after the new dispensational order is passed. Hence, not the panorama of four successive world-empires—portrayed by the successive parts of the great image from head to feet, and spanning the vast "Times of the Gentiles"—constitutes the "secret" of the whole vision, but the point upon which all else converges as "this secret" is expressed in verses 44, 45: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which

shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Several things are revealed by these verses when taken in connection with what precedes:

1. A sudden, diametrical change of dispensation, by which the long-standing world-imperialism shall be demolished under the resistless intervention of a successionless kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven.

2. Evidences that this refers to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel under Christ. First, the dispensational reversion, by which Israel is to be restored to her covenanted place among the nations, is the matter under consideration, as has already been made apparent. Secondly, the statement that "the kingdom shall not be left to other people," implies the restoration of kingdom to Israel for ever. Thirdly, the stone, which executes the stupendous reversal of world-order, is to be identified with the previously revealed designation of the coming King of Israel as "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel" (Gen. 49:24).

3. The peculiar governmental situation existing in the imperial world when this sudden change will be imposed. "In the days of these kings." The connection shows that the final form of rule in the imperial world will be that of ten kingdoms, existing in two equal groups of five each belonging to two main divisions of the whole territory, and that the government of these kingdoms will be an unequal and insecure combination of "kings mingling with the seed of men"; that is, monarchy and democracy will be combined in government, although they cannot coalesce.

What a flood of light this throws upon the titanic struggle for mutual extermination now going on between monarchy and democracy! We can see that not the final elimination of either one, but rather an unsatisfactory, impossible, merely temporary accommodation to, and combination with, one another, in a ten-fold monarchico-democratic division of the imperial world, will represent the last effort of self-appointed man to rule the world. It is to be specially noted that this peculiar international situation develops in the "latter days" of the dispensation, and that it is found in its maturity when the blow from above suddenly and unexpectedly falls. How near we are to this final consummation, and what immediate relation the recent struggle (the World-War of 1914-1918) has to its development, it seems impossible more than to surmise. But "here is wisdom" in the matter for these days of determined monarchy, on the one hand, and of equally determined democracy, on the other hand.

The effect of this revelation upon the mind of the Gentile king was to cause him to acknowledge Christ, the Son of God, as supreme above all celestial divinities and terrestrial powers, and the only omniscient One. It also led him to give to God's Hebrew servants places in affairs of State, of which they were worthy and for which they were capable. Chapters 3-6 further set forth the attitude demanded by Christ from Gentile monarchs toward Himself and toward His people Israel during the present times. Full freedom of worship was secured for the Jews by the episode of the fiery furnace, Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar relates how he was brought, apparently by actual regeneration of soul, to give, and to plead for, full heart-loyalty to Jehovah. In Chapter 5 Belshazzar is rebuked and removed for flagrant disregard of Jehovah's claim. In Chapter 6 Darius, the head of the new Empire, is brought to accord for himself, and to command from all his subjects and realms, the highest fear to Daniel's God.

VISION OF THE BEASTS.

Chapter 7 contains the next revelation, which was given "in the first year of Belshazzar," probably 541 B. C. It was an ominous day when this man assumed the regency,—just the time for God to give to Daniel privately this revelation which was of strictly Jewish interest.

It will be readily perceived that the vision is contained in vs. 2-14, and that it consists of two main parts.

1. Verses 2-8. Here is a succession of four symbolical beasts, descending in nobility from one to another, and representing increasingly divided and complicated forms, until the last and worst beast is described as having ten horns, which evidently spring up at a late stage. The real focus, however, of this part of the vision is described in v. 8: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."

2. Verses 9-14. This clearly is a celestial scene, which first describes the expulsion of hostile thrones from our skies for the inauguration there of the Eternal, with all His hosts in attendance, and which then describes the execution of heaven's judgment upon the last beast and the investiture of the Son of man (the Son of God incarnate) instead with all earthly rule.

To Daniel's troubled inquiry for the full meaning of this vision (vs. 15, 16) a very brief interpretation was given (vs. 17, 18): "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."

This clearly identifies this vision with Nebuchadnezzar's image so far as the successive world-empires are concerned; but it also makes it absolutely plain that a

perpetual restoration of the kingdom to Israel was to be understood.

This much Daniel evidently readily grasped; but he had perceived details in the vision which were more mysterious to him and which still required explanation. They related especially to the "little horn"; and he made very explicit inquiry on the matter (vs. 19-22): "Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, and of the ten horns , and of the other which came up, [Thus far it is only a repetition of preceding descriptions. The real inquiry now follows.] I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days did sit, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Evidently Daniel's inquiry relates especially to this violent and destructive persecution of his people by the little horn just before their being restored to kingdom. The answer to this inquiry is given in vs. 23-27, and it makes everything very plain. It is to the effect that the Gentile times shall terminate in a period described as "a time and times and the dividing of time"; i. e., three and one-half times or, presumably, years—during which this world-emperor will be allowed to sweep every sacred Israelitish institution away and decimate the covenant people, until suddenly the intervention from heaven shall sweep him and his whole Empire away like chaff, and establish the Jews in kingdom again under the most High, the Son of man, the incarnate and glorified Christ.

"I WOULD KNOW THE TRUTH" OF ALL THIS.

In the two revelations thus far met with, we have found that Daniel was much exercised to have the symbolism interpreted plainly to him. We will find it characteristic of the book throughout, that Daniel's spirit could not rest without full understanding of the

mysteries, and that his spirit was in each instance set at perfect rest through a complete interpretation to his understanding of all the important disclosures recorded in this book. Now, if we would know the truth of all this likewise, how is it to be realized? If Daniel's understanding was left incomplete, is it possible for ours to be made certain and perfect? In other words, is not our understanding to be reached only, and is it not to be reached perfectly, through his understanding passed on intact and intelligible to us? This is the ground taken by the writer without hesitation or qualification. Hence the book is to be taken as itself the complete and final light, which needs no interpreter, no later illumination, no "keys to its interpretation." Such "helps" only lead into uncertainty and mystification; whereas, if the book be taken as plain revelation, with nothing between us and it, we may have just the same full and satisfying understanding that Daniel testifies to himself. Of course, there are many things which Daniel understood only by explained vision,—in advance of historical fulfilment—which we understand now by historical fulfilment also. But the historical event does not explain the vision; the explained vision identifies the historical event. And what has not yet been historically fulfilled will be recognized with certainty, only as the vision as explained to Daniel is taken to reveal perfectly in advance the identical fulfilment of the same.

VISION OF THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT.

The first verse of Chapter 8 dates this vision in the last days of the Babylonian Empire, "the third year of the reign [regency] of King Belshazzar"; but verse 2 projects the vision from the standpoint of the succeeding Persian Empire, of which Shushan was the capital. Verse 17 focuses the vision, however, upon "the time of the end"; and verse 19 describes the point of supreme interest upon which all centers thus: "Behold, I will

make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation."

Daniel's mind was directed in this vision, then, upon an exhaustive infliction of wrath in "the time of the end" as the real point of the whole revelation.

The ram, of vs. 3, 4, is explained in v. 20 to represent the Medo-Persian Empire, 538-320 B. C. The he-goat, of vs. 5-8, is explained in vs. 21, 22 to represent the rise of the Grecian Empire (under Alexander the Great) and its after-formation into a four-kingdom Empire, as came to pass historically about 300 B. C.

The time of the rise of the "little horn" (v. 9) out of one of the aforementioned four is explained in v. 23 to be "in the latter time of their kingdom"; i. e., in the latter time of the four members of the Grecian Empire. This time is immediately identified with the time "when the transgressors are come to the full." This must mean the transgressors upon whom "the last end of the indignation" is to fall. Hence "the time of the end" and "the latter time of their kingdom" are synchronous terms. The "little horn" and his doings, as described in vs. 9-12, is explained in vs. 23-25 as "a king of fierce countenance," etc., that shall, with superhuman power, "destroy the mighty and the holy people" and even "stand up against the Prince of princes."

This plainly identifies the "little horn" of Chapter 8 with that of Chapter 7; only in Chapter 8 we are shown that he is to rise out of one of the four quarters of the old Grecian Empire which are to be revived as kingdoms in "the time of the end"; that he is to be used to finish God's visitation of indignation upon the Jews who are denominated "the mighty and the holy people"; that this visitation is when "the [Jewish] transgressors are come to the full"; and that the "little horn" will contest the coming of Christ Himself in power and glory to rule over Israel as their King and over all the world as "the Prince of princes."

From verse 9 we gather that this Anti-Christ will arise in either the northern or the western quarter,—the Syrian or the Grecian kingdom—and make conquest of “the pleasant land.” According to vs. 10-14 he will there trample down the hosts of heaven’s chosen people, defy their Prince Himself, terminate the (renewed) daily sacrifice and desecrate and ruin the (latter-day) Temple of the Jews. All this will be “by reason of (their) transgression.” And we learn that it will be 2300 days—6 years, 4 months and 20 days—before the Temple will be “cleansed,” or, as the Margin reads, “justified,” or vindicated from this outrage. This last outrage is plainly the climax of all the horrors of Israel’s final tribulation; and, in v. 26, Gabriel emphasizes to Daniel the truth, or certainty, of this part of the vision.

The last words of v. 27 are not to be taken as meaning that no one understood the vision, but only that none understood why Daniel should be so affected by the vision. Or, it may be rightly explained by Leeser’s translation: “I was depressed because of the vision; but no one observed it.”

VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

From 9:1-3 we learn that in the first year of the reign of Darius, first king of the Medo-Persian Empire,—B. C. 538-7—anticipating according to prophetic books, especially that of Jeremiah (29:10), the near approach of the termination of the seventy years’ captivity of the Jews, Daniel engaged in confession and supplication before God for His restoring grace upon His people and His holy city (vs. 15-19). It was upon this background that the arch-angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel (vs. 20, 21), to give him appropriate information (v. 22), and the understanding which he needed of a new vision which Daniel seems (v. 23) to have had earlier in his season of study and intercession.

This information is contained in verse 24, which may

be read intelligently with just a little paraphrasing thus: "Not these seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity, O Daniel, will suffice, but seventy weeks; i. e., sevens, of years are pre-determined of God upon thy people, the Jews, and upon thy city, Jerusalem, to bring Israel to the end of her career of stiffnecked transgression, to effect the ending of all her besetting sins, to purge out of her effectually her 'bent to backsliding,' to bring the remnant of her children into everlasting righteousness, to fulfill exhaustively all the contents of vision and prophecy relative to her ultimate restoration, and to anoint the Most Holy Temple of her final and inviolable worship."

These consummations constituted all that Daniel's heart was panting after for his people. Yet it was no more than "vision and prophecy" had already promised, only all had not anywhere before been so comprehensively and strikingly summarized. The special point of new information consisted of the time-measurement of seventy sevens of years yet to be fulfilled in Israel's national career ere this happy termination arrived. Very likely Daniel had witness in the new vision the panorama of this vast stretch of time yet future, with its august march of events which needed to be interpreted to him, as the arch-angel proceeded to do.

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" (v. 25). This covers 483 of the whole span of 490 years. Their starting point, however, was yet in the future, to be marked by an imperial ordinance for Jerusalem to be reconstituted as the capital of an autonomous Hebrew State. Such a decree was given by Artaxerxes Longimanus on the Jewish New Year's Day in 445 B. C. (Neh. 2: 1, 5-8). The 483 years were to end just as exactly on the day of

the entrance into that capital city of the Jewish Messiah, Christ Jesus, as the Prince of Israel. It is found that the 483 years (Jewish, making 173,880 days) reach, to a day, from the Jewish New Year's of 445 B. C. to Palm Sabbath (not "Palm Sunday") of 32 A. D., when, for the first and only time, Jesus entered Jerusalem as "King of Israel" (John 12:12-15) according to prophetic signs. On this occasion the Jewish rulers rejected the Prince and determined upon His destruction. Thereupon the rejected Prince repudiated the apostate nation and pronounced upon the Jewish State its age-long dissolution (Matt. 21:42, 43, 23:37-39).

"And after [the] sixty and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself," (v. 26). Of course, this refers to the crucifixion of Jesus which occurred four days after Palm Sabbath, or on Wednesday afternoon. Thus the crucifixion stands outside the course of the weeks and in an interval between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week.

"And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (v. 26). This clearly refers to the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A. D. But the major point here seems to be that the Romans are called "the people of the prince that shall come." This is not the Prince spoken of in the previous verse, the Christ, but it is the anti-prince, the Antichrist. In being spoken of as "the prince that shall come," he is referred to as one already very familiar as a coming one, so that he is clearly to be identified with the "little horn," of Chapters 7 and 8, and with the "king of fierce countenance," of Chapter 8.

"And the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined," v. 26. Right understanding here depends upon perceiving that the adverb "thereof" refers to the prince, and not to the city and the sanctuary. The meaning is that the anti-prince shall come to his end suddenly as with a flood.

This is in full harmony with what has been repeatedly stated of him already in this book. The focus here, however, is centered upon the desolations which shall attend the war of this prince against his victims until his sudden overthrow.

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” (v. 27). This is now very plain, and it clears up some previous matters. It is implied that, not only will the Hebrew State be reconstituted under treaty with the Anti-Christ for one week, or seven years, but the Roman Empire will also be reconstituted in the last days, with the Anti-Christ as its final Emperor. Now, in the midst of this last of the seventy years of Jewish autonomy, the Anti-Christ will impiously and forcibly terminate the daily sacrifices in the Jewish Temple (of the last days) and trample the sanctuary under foot, as was so extendedly and graphically foretold in 8:10-13. It is clear now, that the “time and times and the dividing of time,” of 7:25, means three and one-half years, and that the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the profanation of the sanctuary mentioned in 8:11, 13, is at the beginning of this period, and that both these references are parallel with 9:27 which we are just considering. For the last three and one-half of the 490 years the Anti-Christ will mantle the Holy Land with all satanic abomination, until the divinely appointed desolation of the Jewish nation is brought to a consummation. The object of the whole vision is to show through what a cyclone of abominations the group of happy consummations described in verse 24 is to be brought about. Lastly, it is plain that the 2300 days of 8:14 begin with the last three and one-half years, so that that measurement overruns the latter by

two years, 10 months and 20 days. No explanation is anywhere offered regarding the event reached by the 2300 days excepting that "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (8:14). The marginal translation, "justified," for "cleansed," offers the idea of the vindication of the sanctuary from that great outrage. And what vindication could be so complete as the erection and dedication of the new millennial "Most Holy" place of sacrifice and worship? And the above overlapping of time would be none too long for the accomplishing of this final vindication.

DANIEL'S LAST VISION.

The extended portion of the Book of Daniel which is contained in Chapters 10-12 is given to his last revelation. In 10:1 the time when he received it is exactly located in the third year of the reign of Cyrus the Great, 533 B. C. Daniel was a very old man, probably in his nineties; yet he was not senile, but just ripe for this supreme experience as a prophet of God. He was deeply burdened anew over the future of his people. Although Cyrus had initiated his reign with the liberation of the captive Jews, yet already political influences were prevailing at the court against the Jews "to frustrate their purpose" (Ezra 4:5)—and God's purpose—of building the new temple at Jerusalem. Daniel, by prayer and fasting for "three full weeks" (v. 2), "set his heart to understand" (v. 12) the further mystery of God's solution of the restoration of the Jews. That he was rewarded with clear revelation and understanding is strongly emphasized in 10:1, 11, 12, 14, 21, 11:2. The "understanding" given to Daniel is shared with every reader who simply takes the record as it reads, with no further "interpretation." Any so-called "key to Daniel," brought in from outside, will surely lock up the book, for the book is already open.

THE OBJECTIVE.

The purpose of this last revelation is just as explicitly stated in verse 14 as we have found the purport of each preceding vision stated. And the focus is found to be in common with that of the previous ones; the different revelations simply furnish distinctive aspects of one and the same focus. The angel announces to Daniel: "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." This focuses our vision steadily throughout upon the experience of Daniel's people in the closing days of their subjection to the Gentiles.

THE HEAVENLY RULE.

Before taking up the angel's exposition of the vision to Daniel, it will be appropriate to dwell a little upon the remarkable disclosure of angelic operations relating to earthly affairs, which Daniel's visitant—presumably Gabriel—incidentally made to him. In the mind of the Spirit of God it cannot be unimportant that these transactions in the skies should be included here in Daniel's narrative.

A marvellous celestial scene is flashed upon our minds by the references to the angelic activities contained in 10: 13, 20, 21 and 11: 1: "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.....And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.....And there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him [Michael]."

This indicated that a direct relationship to earthly nations and events exists on the part of two conflicting

angelic forces,—the forces enlisted for the will of God and the forces enlisted against His will; that the issue of titanic struggles in the skies determines, and is reflected by, the course of events in the earth; that nations and empires of the earth have kings and princes in the skies under satanic appointment and in satanic interest, and that Israel, at least, has an archangel of God, Michael, as her prince; that angelic forces of light have appointed duties with reference to international earthly affairs, especially where the interests of Israel and of the kingdom of Christ associated with Israel are affected; that so strong is the satanic opposition, so formidable often is the satanic coalition, that the mightiest angels of God are required to ally themselves in mutual and reciprocal assistance.

This throws a flood of light upon all human history as the drama of the ages through which God, in spite of the most gigantic opposition in the heavenlies, is accomplishing on earth His purposes in Christ as the promised Seed of the woman, the promised Heir of Abraham to the world, the promised King of the Jews who is to sit upon the throne of David at Jerusalem as the blessed and only Potentate of the earth. We can readily conceive why there was such a critical juncture in the affairs of Israel and of Christ just in that "third year of Cyrus king of Persia." We have already cited Ezra's record of the way in which the malignant neighbors of the returned Jewish exiles were already hindering the building of the new temple by hostile influence at the court of Cyrus. Daniel opens our eyes to the thrilling counterpart that was going on in the skies. Herein we find light upon the recent course of earthly events. Surely there was reflection in those awful days of frantic satanic exertions in the skies. And there is striking evidence pushing to the front that the Jew was again the storm center, the bone of contention between these jealous watchers in the skies, and that the

history of the greatest conflict of earthly history pertained to the progress of God's purpose in Christ as it is locked up in that people of prophetic destiny. May not the very climax of the ages which rivets the gaze of Hebrew prophecy be closely approaching?

FOREGROUND OF THE VISION.

After so long an introduction the angel begins his message of revelation with the words: "And now will I show thee the truth" (11:2). We are to remember what the angel had already stated as the objective of the vision,—"what shall befall thy people in the latter days." This enables us to see that he approaches this final objective through an extensive foreground.

"Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (v. 2). Thus the interpreter begins with Daniel's immediate historical position in its relation to the end. The first link in the chain is found in the fourth successor to Cyrus (the reigning king of Persia), who should make a supreme effort to crush Grecia. From our historical position we know this means the invasion conducted by Xerxes, which was so signally defeated at Salamis in the year 480 B. C.

"And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his kingdom which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those" (vs. 3, 4). The conjunction of verse 3 with verse 2 clearly indicates a retaliatory stroke against Persia from Grecia, by which imperial rule passes from the former to the latter. But verse 4 shows that this new Empire soon falls into four sections

with usurping heads and with consequent depression of power. We see this all exactly fulfilled in the ascendancy of Alexander the Great gained over Persian imperial sway, and the transition which his Empire underwent following his untimely death. This second stage of progress in the foreground of the panorama brings us down to about 300 B. C.

We do not have to read far along till we find that, beginning with verse 5, a prophetic outline was given Daniel of a fluctuating and protracted struggle for supremacy between Egypt, the southern member of the quaternate Grecian Empire, and Syria, the northern member. The history of these two kingdoms for over a century and a half as we know it is an exact replica of the angel's description. The reason for the angel's entering now so much into detail is evidently because the plot comes to involve Daniel's people so intimately. They are first introduced in verse 14: "and in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south [Egypt]: also *the robbers of thy people* shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall." At verse 21, however, the angel's forecast of coming events reaches an unique successor to the northern kingdom of Syria, who, while nearly as much space in the story is given to him as to all his predecessors together, yet is not once honored with the name king, but is left before us only as "a vile person" (v. 21). The reason for according so much attention to this execrable person is evidently because of the extreme persecutions waged by him against the Jews, as we are to understand the language employed in the description to mean.

"Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land" (v. 28). This clearly means that, upon returning from a very successful attack upon Egypt, he will turn aside to

wreak his hatred against the people of "the holy covenant" in exploits of savagery. "For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant" (v. 30). This forecasts the defeat which the invader was to meet from a Roman fleet just when about to attain his full purpose of crushing Egypt. In consequence he returns homeward in chagrin, but he turns aside to spend his rage upon the people of the "holy covenant," not a few of whom forsake the covenant in his favor. "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall do exploits" (vs. 31, 32). This presents a vivid picture of the extreme stress of the times out of which emerges a band of heroes of unparalleled faith and valor. "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white" (vs. 33-35). The interest of the vision clearly passes over from mere persecution to the results in securing a perfectly winnowed, purified and shining company of believers. But what do the words immediately following signify? "To try them, and to purge, and to make them white, *even to* [or with respect to] *the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed*" (v. 35). Here first the focus of the vision is sighted. It is apparent that, while verses 21-35 belong still to the "Foreground," yet the point is here

reached where foreground links with focus, "the time of the end." The connection is formed through this illustrious company of heroes of faith who, in their day, saved the cause of Christ from perishing before the consummation of God's purpose for Israel could be accomplished, which was to be "yet for a time appointed" far in the distance. It hardly needs to be stated that this graphic and captivating portrayal was fulfilled to the letter by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria (175-164 B. C.), on the one side, and by the Maccabaeen heroes, on the other side, who resisted his outrages and brought Judea to a plane of freedom never before or since enjoyed since the fall of Judah in 587 B. C. The Maccabees are not, however, here lifted into view prophetically so much for their military prowess, as for that spiritual victory, described in verses 32-35, by which was anticipated "the time of the end." These Maccabees were the prototypes of the believing remnant of the last days.

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done" (v. 36).

As verse 35 found in the purified Maccabaeen saints of those long-ago days the veritable spiritual sample of the Jewish remnant of the last days, so now, in the above verse, we find the vision dealing directly with

THE TIME OF THE END.

The king here introduced is the one by whom "the indignation [shall] be accomplished" and "that that is determined shall be done." And all the rest of this chapter throws upon the canvas more fully than ever before the character and career of

THE ARROGANT KING.

This king is taken up so familiarly as to make it easy for a careless reader to think that he is still reading about that "vile person," Antiochus Epiphanes. Closer attention, however, shows that this familiar manner of speaking of this king is due simply to the fact that already three times in this book he has been placed prominently in the vision of the last days, so that his personality would come to mind at once upon arriving in the vision at the final stage. He is, therefore, that already familiar personage, the last, mightiest and most malignant persecutor and over-lord of Israel, who is to come in the last days. Verses 36-39 paint a most shocking picture of his satanic infidelity and self-assertion. Verse 40, taken in comparison with 8:9, makes it apparent that he is first to arise out of the western, the Macedonian, quarter of the old Grecian Empire, when, according to 8:23, the four parts formerly constituting the territory of that Empire shall again be constituted into kingdoms. (It will be remembered that a line has been running all through the visions of this book relating specially to Greece). And here, as well as in the previous visions, it is shown that the Anti-Christ will have to subdue by arms the other three kingdoms. But we also remember that the Romans were to be "the people of the prince that is to come" (9:25). This enables us to understand that the Anti-Christ is to progress without force from his conquest of the territories of the old Grecian Empire into the emperorship of the wider territory of the old Roman Empire. After describing the military activities of this world-tyrant the chapter closes with this monarch's mysterious disappearance.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (12:1).

This verse clearly constitutes the very focus of the vision which, as the angel informed Daniel in 10:14, consists of "What shall befall thy people in the latter days." Chapter 12 then, concludes the comprehensive panorama of the Book of Daniel with the climax,—

RESCUE OF THE BELEAGURED REMNANT OF ISRAEL.

Verse 1 forecasts arch-angelic intervention in behalf of Daniel's people while in the midst of unparalleled tribulation. The deliverance, however, is shown to be only of the spiritual children of God among Israel, while all other Jews must go down to death and perdition. These are the birth-pangs by which "shall a nation be born at once," an Israel "all righteous" (Isa. 66:8; 60:21). Those "found written in the book"—of the living Jews—are those of whom the Maccabaeans were the prototype, and who are described in verse 10: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." But, besides these living ones, verse 2 includes in view the deceased saints of Israel of all generations, who shall then be raised from the dust of the earth: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some [the righteous ones] to everlasting life, and some [the unrighteous ones who shall be left to be raised later] to everlasting contempt." Of course this resurrection of righteous Israelites is included in the resurrection of all saints at Christ's coming.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and for ever" (v. 3). We may miss the track here entirely if we do not read this in logical connection. As the angel said (11:32) regarding the Maccabaeon days, "And they that understand among the people [understand the truth of God for the hour] shall instruct many," so in this later, more extreme, stress of the last days, there shall be spiritually wise ones, Scripturally enlightened ones, who in example and in teaching shall shine forth on the

lurid background like constellations of first magnitude and shall turn many tempted, wavering Israelites away from the Anti-Christ to the Christ just at hand to appear. For this very reason injunction is given to Daniel: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end" (v. 4). This was intended to secure the Book of Daniel for its most important use in that coming crisis of which the book principally treats. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (v. 4). What a jump from the track to apply this to present-day "globe trotting" and to "the advancement of science and knowledge"! The "many" are still Israelites of the last days of the tribulation. Their running "to and fro" is through the pages of prophecy, especially the Book of Daniel, these very pages which we are now perhaps all too idly perusing. There will be nothing listless in those beleagured, but anxiously inquiring Jews. It will not then be a matter of different "theories of Daniel," but of Daniel alone. Their teachers will not be such as are taught on Daniel, but such as are wise in Daniel. It will be too late then to run through other books,—books on prophecy but not prophetic books. If the one book—the prophecy itself—is not sufficient and self-sufficient, then those anxious inquirers will have to stumble on to their doom. But, thank God! the more they "run to and fro" the more "knowledge shall be increased,"—saving knowledge. We might learn from this how to increase our own knowledge in God's Word.

In verses 5-8 the question is raised again how long this appalling tribulation shall last, only it is angelic bystanders who raise the question. The answer is solemnly and authoritatively given them that the period shall be, just as has been shown twice before in Daniel, three and one-half times, or years. The negative object of this completion of all Israel's tribulation is expressed in v. 7 thus: "And when he [God, through Anti-Christ]

shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." It is only an utterly helpless and broken Israel—caught inextricably in the net and in hopeless extremity—that God can save for His kingdom. The power of humble reliance upon Jesus, instead of the power of self-reliance, can alone fit Israel for her destiny. Verse 8 shows that while Daniel did not understand the language of verse 7, he was nevertheless, in answer to his own inquiry, informed of the answer given to the angel in verse 7.

In verses 9-12 the positive object of the final tribulation of Jacob is brought out: "Many shall be purified and made white, and tried" (v. 10). It is the process of securing this purified company which forms the subject of this last great revelation. Through the same process it shall follow that "the wicked [Jews] shall do wickedly," in a final and conclusive degree. "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." The tribulation fires, which will melt the wise-hearted, will only harden the foolish-hearted. As with Pharaoh of old, their hearts will be hardened unto irreparable judgment.

In verses 11, 12 two new time measurements are introduced which evidently coincide with, while somewhat overlapping, the three and one-half last years. This constitutes an uninterpreted appendix. We had a long over-lap predicted in 8:14, which is to reach to the cleansing, or vindication, of the desecrated Temple of the last days. But it is not stated what important points are to be reached by the overlaps respectively of thirty and of seventy-five days; and it would be altogether idle to speculate on the matter.

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (v. 13). Thus the angel takes loving leave of the aged prophet, having first centered his further life-view upon "the end." This is not the end of Daniel's natural life, or

that of his "getting to heaven"; but it refers to the end pertaining to Daniel's people which has been constantly in view in the revelations of this book. Daniel's forward view is focalized upon that end because that, after resting long out of the body, he should rise again in glorified body and take up immortal activities in association with the new order of restored Israel. Even so shall every saint and every servant of the Son of God—whether of the old or of the new dispensation—enter in that same day, upon a glorified plane, into "the things done in the body" of mortality.

We have now seen that the Book of Daniel reveals extensively the coming of the millennial kingdom from the standpoint of outcast Israel. There are five great revelations in the book, but they all terminate upon one and the same end; namely, that of the restoration of Israel from Gentile sovereignty to their place in the earth as the national kingdom of the Most High, their Messiah, Jesus Christ. These five revelations present this end, however, under distinctive aspects. Nebuchadnezzar's dream reveals that by heavenly intervention a kingdom is to be set up on earth entirely and forever superseding the longstanding Gentile lordship over Israel. The vision of the four beasts plainly reveals the final and everlasting return of the earthly supremacy to Israel with the Most High, the Christ, as their own King. The vision of the ram and the he-goat especially reveals the dire judgment which God will visit upon Israel at the end through Anti-Christ on account of their ripened transgressions. The vision of the seventy weeks centers attention upon the galaxy of spiritual consummations to which the Jewish State shall at last succeed. And the last vision pictures the purified remnant of the final living Israel which shall constitute this holy nation and mighty kingdom of the Lord on earth, while the deceased believers of Israel shall be resurrected to take their part from celestial position in the affairs of the millennial age.

CHAPTER V.

HOSEA TO ZEPHANIAH.

THESE nine Minor Prophets form a pre-exilic group, leaving three—Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi—as a post-exilic group.

I. HOSEA.

“The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel” (1:1).

This starts Hosea prior to Jeroboam’s death in 783 B. C., and closes his ministry in Hezekiah’s reign, which began in 725 B. C. Hosea’s ministry, therefore, was a long one, probably over sixty years; and probably not less than the forty last years were contemporaneous with Isaiah.

A little examination shows, however, that, while Isaiah prophesied exclusively “concerning Judah and Jerusalem,” Hosea prophesied almost exclusively unto Israel, or “Ephraim” as is the more usual form of address; i. e., the northern kingdom. Hence, Hosea’s career closed with the fall of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes in B. C. 721, or shortly before that time. Hosea can be read intelligently, therefore, only under the light of 2 Kings 14:23-18:12 especially.

Chapter 1. The kingdom of Israel is charged with universal spiritual whoredom; i. e., idolatry; and this whoredom is symbolized notoriously by Hosea’s marriage with a harlot. The three children from this union are given names significant of Christ’s speedy rejection of the kingdom into captivity and dispersion until the last days. “Jezreel” signified the vengeance upon the

royal house of Jehu. "Lo-ruhamah" signified that no mercy was left for Israel, while mercy is still reserved for Judah. "Lo-ammi" presaged the rejection of Israel as the people of God. Yet glorious restoration is promised (vs. 10, 11), which means that one of yet future time, seeing that it is to be along with Judah and under "one Head," meaning, of course, the Messiah.

Chapter 2. Threatening is given that God will frustrate all their efforts to procure prosperity by idolatrous alliances and practices, until they see that prosperity can come only by obeying Christ. To this end He will disperse them among the Gentiles and there visit them with allurements, to cleanse them from idolatrous propensities and to wed them to Himself in indissoluble bonds of judgment, loving-kindness and mercy. "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies" (v. 19). This is the beautiful picture of restoration to Christ of the "Ten Lost Tribes."

Chapter 3. The prophet is directed to pledge himself to another adulterous woman, to wait long for him without harlotry or marrying another. This signified that Israel should be long without a kingdom, native land or temple, yet without running to idols or amalgamating with any other nation. This is a complete disproof of "Anglo-Israelism."

In 4:1-6:3 God maintains strong controversy with Israel and calls loudly to both houses of Jacob, with urgent threats of punishment and captivity until they shall be moved to return unto Him. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early" (5:15). Then follows immediately (6:1-3) a prophetic utterance of their very words of repentance, and of faith for abundant restoration at the coming of the Lord "as the morning," or "as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

In 6:4-14:9 we have a more extended and detailed accusation against Israel—while Judah is not exculpated—and the assurance that God “will punish Jacob according to his ways: according to his doings will he recompense him” (12:2). Chapter 14 closes the section and the book with a final moving prophetic appeal to Ephraim to return, giving him the very words to use in final repentance, and promising him the tenderest kindness and most abundant blessing. It is consoling to know that thus shall Israel some day be healed of all backsliding and be made a blessing, even to blossom as the lily and bring forth fruit from Jehovah.

II. JOEL.

This prophecy is not marked by any historical reference, whether in the superscription or in the body of the book. A little inspection shows that the last chapter is wholly concerned with the millennial restoration of Israel from the standpoint of Zion. Looking backward through Chapters 2 and 1, no break in continuity is found. The only logical conclusion, then, is that this book is purely apocalyptical, not at all dealing with then present times and conditions, but speaking entirely from the situation of the last days.

Chapter 1 pictures great devastation, caused immediately by a ruthless invader, in whose wake follow various plagues. This depicts the time of Anti-Christ and of the tribulation, and it is called “the day of Jehovah,” to whom piteous cry is raised from the contrite remnant.

Chapter 2 still more emphatically describes this epoch as the day of Jehovah’s final wrath against Israel,—a day of awful gloom which is attributed to the invasion of a people more terrible than Israel had thus far known. Verses 12-14 introduce the hope that true repentance may turn away God’s wrath; and the contrition

and prayer of verses 15-17 may be attributed to the remnant of Israel at the height of the tribulation. In verses 18-27 we have God's gracious response in words which clearly imply the final restoration. Verses 28-32 portray the great spiritual outpouring upon remaining Israel, the real Pentecost, toward which the apostolical Pentecost—as well as any other of this Pentecostal Age—only pointed forward as a partial illustration.

Chapter 3 still more clearly unfolds the last days. Vs. 1-8 describe the assembling of all nations under Anti-Christ against Jerusalem, not alone for Israel's chastisement, but, as here more especially represented, for the suitable "recompense upon their own head" (v. 7). Verses 9-12 vividly picture the mustering of this international anti-Christian host. The amazing military genius of the nations now being displayed, albeit with universal peace as its professed object, is a sign of the nearness of the time here predicted. It cannot be emphasized too strongly, that, according to this and other prophecies, the dispensation of peace is to be ushered in, not by decisive international grapple on European battle-fronts, but by the Lord's decisive, destructive arrest of a universal armed combination rendezvoused in the Holy Land and deployed about Jerusalem, with intent in common to annihilate God's Israel, largely regathered there in their impenitency. Verses 13-21 close this apocalyptic panorama with a vision of the overthrow of Anti-Christ's host by Christ's descent from on high, His deliverance of the godly remnant of Jews, and their everlasting establishment in their own land. Let the whole passage—3: 9-21—now stand forth before the eye and the mind in its graphic portrayal like a moving picture:

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles:

"Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

"Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen [Gentiles], and gather yourselves together round about.

"Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.

"Let the heathen [Gentiles] be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen [Gentiles] round about.

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake.

"But the Lord will be the hope of his children, and the strength of the children of Israel.

"So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain.

"Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

"Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

"But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord [Jesus Christ] dwelleth in Zion."

III. AMOS.

Amos is dated (1:1) in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, but far back in his long reign to a time prior to the close of the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel. The prophecy is also dated "two years before the earthquake." This was evidently an appalling calamity and an awful signal of divine wrath. It is doubtless to be

identified with that referred to in Zech. 14:5 as like to one which shall attend the return to Mt. Olivet of Christ in His glory.

The book is in two pretty distinct parts, 1:1-3:8 and 3:9-9:15.

In 1:1-2:8 the prophet warns the immediate neighboring nations of Syria, Philistia, Edom, Ammon and Moab of well-deserved judgment which God is to inflict upon them along with His castigation of Judah and Israel. In 2:9-3:8 God reasons with "the whole family" of Israel over the necessity for His punishment of them, seeing He had sorely judged Egypt to secure their exodus and had destroyed the Amorite to give them the land of promise. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (3:2).

It is pertinent to note in passing a wonderful testimony to God's open way of dealing especially with His own people: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (v. 7). This bears a witness to the plain, self-evident character of prophetic disclosures.

Relative to the second part, the main part, of the book, it is noticeable that the whole burden relates to the northern kingdom. Reference to the history of Jeroboam II in 2 Kings affords us the evidence that under this third ruler of the house of Jehu the languishing kingdom of Israel was greatly revived with victory, prestige and prosperity. But Amos exposes the purposes of pride, oppression, violence and sensual indulgence to which this uplift was prostituted; so that the fall of the kingdom under divine judgment was greatly hastened. Amos was the voice of Christ to the giddy kingdom and the hand which rudely pressed to their lips the cup of impending doom. Jeroboam's son reigned but six months and was publicly assassinated, thus fulfilling the word of the Lord to Jehu (2 Kings 10:30)

that his sons should sit on his throne only until the fourth generation. The affairs of the kingdom went rapidly from bad to worse, and the first captivity—of large extent—took place within a few years, to be succeeded by the final captivity a generation or so later.

In Chapter 9 the climax of the prediction of the destruction of the kingdom is reached; and no more fearful passage is to be found in Scripture, exhibiting God's pursuit of the ill-fated nation with ruthless, remorseless eagerness, closing with the words, "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth" 9:8. Instantly, however, it is shown that this does not mean utter extinction. Nowhere is the doctrine of a finally saved, but exclusively holy, remnant of Israel so explicitly and minutely presented.

"Saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord" (9:8). The explanation follows at once: "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain [godly member] fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."

Then follows a very clear and impressive picture of the millennial restoration:

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen [Gentiles], which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I

will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord [Jesus Christ] thy God" (9: 11-15).

It will be recognized how significantly the Apostle James, in Acts 15: 13-18, quotes v. 11 in explanation of the problem before the Jerusalem Council. He opens the quotation with the phrase "After this," instead of "In that day." In Amos 9: 9, 10 two things are pictured,—the sifting of the house of Israel among the nations, and the extermination of the "sinners among my people." James sees the former being fulfilled in the dispersion of the Jews in consequence of the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. The latter, of course, waits for the tribulation of the last days. He sees that the gathering of a people "for the name of the Lord," out from among all nations, is being accomplished while Israel is in dispersion; so that it is "after this," as well as "in that day" of Israel's final tribulation that the restoration is to come.

IV. OBADIAH.

This vision is declared to be "concerning Edom" (v. 1). Edom lay to the southeast of Judah and was inhabited by the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother; consequently, the Edomites were blood-brethren of the Israelites.

A great prostration of Edom nationally, in point of strength and honor, is here predicted (vs. 1, 2). Two principal reasons for this judgment are assigned; First, the towering pride and self-confidence of the nation (vs. 3-9); then, malicious and treacherous dealing against the children of Israel in the day of calamity and captivity (vs. 10-18).

Occasion is taken to point anew to the victory and eminence to be ultimately given to Israel over all her enemies and oppressors, here especially over "the house of Esau":

“But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their [Edom’s] possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it. And they of the south [part of Judah] shall possess the mount of Esau; and they of the plain the Philistines; and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south. And saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau: and the kingdom shall be the Lord’s” (vs. 17-21).

V. JONAH.

From 2 Kings 14:25, we learn that Jonah prophesied in or before the days of Jeroboam II, who reigned about 825-784, and that this king’s successes were according to Jonah’s predictions. Hence Jonah was a prophet of Israel, and he was the earliest of all the prophets from whom we have writings.

This book is not so much a message as a narrative of the experiences of the Lord’s messenger. Jonah was directed to proclaim to the capital city of the world, Nineveh—the capital of the mighty empire of Assyria—her immediate overthrow for her great wickedness in God’s sight. This throws great light upon God’s relations to the heathen nations of antiquity, and the use He had for Israel as His light to them by example and by bold testimony. Jonah, however, reflects the delinquent disposition of Israel on account of cowardice and prejudice. He gets to Nineveh at last by way of the fish’s belly, through a death and resurrection experience of heart such as we all need before we are conformed to the obedience of the crucified and risen Christ, of whom Jonah served as a type.

Jonah’s mission to Nineveh seemed to him a failure,

because the city was spared by God upon its repentance. But it was the highest success in view of God's will that all men should come to repentance and not perish. It is to be noted that Nineveh was spared for nearly two centuries and a half. What light is here thrown upon God's relations to mankind, to nations, even to the brute creation; showing that He is good and His tender mercies are over all his creatures! And this book helps us wonderfully to perceive how God will make a sanctified and restored Israel a blessing to all the families of the earth. God hasten the day when Israel shall be both a model of what the grace of God can do and a messenger of that grace to all nations!

VI. MICAH.

The prophet introduces himself as a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea, but as quite equally a prophet to Judah and Israel. The history of the times needs to be read for light upon the prophecy; but the prophecy exposes moral and spiritual conditions which we would not discern from the history. Israel was sweeping rapidly to her doom, and Judah was suffering severe and well-deserved chastisements. A world-wide assize is summoned to hear God's charges against His people (1:2). An awful revelation of God in judgment upon His sinful people is announced, involving the fall of both kingdoms, but that of Israel only immediately (vs. 3-7). The Assyrian invader, that was to overthrow Israel, is seen to come to the very gates of Jerusalem, as was fulfilled through Sennacherib (v. 9). The first part of the book, Chapters 1 and 2, closes with a promise of re-gathering of the entire nation as a remnant (2:12, 13).

The second part, Chapters 3-5, first charges home the sins for which both kingdoms were to be dispersed, Chapter 3. Then follow glorious millennial pictures. In 4:1, 2 we have Isa. 2:2-3 almost identically, presenting Jerusalem in her final restoration as the metropolis of

the earth, politically, religiously and morally: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills: and the people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the Lord from Jerusalem."

Then first shall come world-wide peace, preserved not by military and naval equipment, by Hague conventions, League of Nations, and international police, as is confidently proposed today; but "He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (v. 3).

This is the final regathering and restoration of long-dispersed and sorely afflicted and diminished Israel:

"But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree: and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever. In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted: and I will make her that halteth a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion: the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (vs. 4-8).

This restoration, however, will not come about till after, not only a Babylonian captivity, but also a final tribulation from an international invasion, (of course, that under the Anti-Christ in the last days) a tribulation

which the Lord will, however, turn for the little believing remnant into sweeping and lasting victory (vs. 9-13). These prospects are further set forth in Chapter 5, only the first advent of the eternal Son of God is first introduced, followed by the present rejection of Israel until the last days when the remnant shall be secured:

"Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: He hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God: and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth" (vs. 1-4).

Attention has been repeatedly called to the fact that it was Christ who was dealing with Israel in olden time, and that Israel knew Him as their divine King and coming Messiah. We have right at this point in Micah the clearest confirmation of this. "And this *man* shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land" (v. 5). Thus in an instant the prophet reverts from the final deliverance of the remnant of Israel to deliverance in the then prospective invasion of Sennacherib, and he identifies the same One as the peace-bringer on both occasions.

Finally, in the third part of Micah, Chapters 6 and 7, millennial features still flit before our eyes through accusations, predictions of judgment, and through comforting promises which had their application also to existing conditions and to events of the nearer future.

VII. NAHUM.

"The burden of Nineveh," a prophecy against the Assyrian capital, just then most triumphant, but nearing its downfall in 625 B. C. at the hands of the Babylonians. Usher's date, B. C. 713, would synchronize this prophecy with that of Isaiah in the critical hour of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah.

We are not to forget that, through Israel's messenger Jonah, Nineveh had a century before been called to her knees for mercy from Jehovah, Israel's heavenly King, and that He had graciously suspended punitive sentence for further probation. No wonder, then, that now, when the reigning king of Assyria had "sent to reproach the living God" right to His face in His holy sanctuary at Jerusalem, God's answer to the prayers of His afflicted suppliants was:

"Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: this is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him: The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn: the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel [Christ, their King] . . . Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put mine hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest . . . For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake" (Isa. 37: 21-24, 29, 35).

Through Nahum, Chapter 1, God expresses His jealousy, vengeance and fury against this ungrateful and incorrigible enemy (vs. 2-6), while showing Himself to be so slow to anger and such a stronghold to those who trust Him in the face of such malignant powers, (v. 7). He then foreshows "the overrunning flood" which shall sweep the invader away from the afflicted Jews, declaring, "I will make thy grave; for thou art vile"; while despatching "upon the mountains the feet

of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee: he is utterly cut off" (vs. 8-15).

But even such a blow upon stout-hearted Assyria could not finally satisfy the righteous indignation of God. Therefore Chapters 2 and 3 depict at length and most graphically the stupendous event of Nineveh's final overthrow less than a century later. In Chapter 2 is given a vivid description of the siege of Nineveh, —the attack, the irruption of the city, the panic as Jehovah sends destruction into the lion's den. (It may be worth while to expose the nonsensical interpretation often put today upon vs. 3 and 4 in making them predictive of our automobiles as "signs of these last days." These verses had their fulfillment more than twenty-six centuries ago. No end of mischief results from such disjointed and fanciful "interpretation of prophecy." Such an illustration emphasizes the need for reading prophecy in a common sense way.)

Chapter 3 depicts the utter ruin and obloquy of ancient Nineveh, the ruins of which to this day attest the literal verity of divine prophecy. God frankly states the ground for such merciless judgment upon this old "bloody city." Volumes of secular history can add nothing to the awful picture given us here of Nineveh's fiendishness, which is summed up in the last words of the prophet thus: "For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?"

VIII. HABAKKUK.

While this prophecy is not directly dated, yet 1:6 serves to show that it was the time of Judah's extreme degeneracy when approaching her overthrow from the Chaldean powers, in B. C. 587.

A little examination leads to the discovery that the book is constructed on the line of successive questions

and answers concerning God's moral government of His people and the nations.

1. In view of the protracted and excessive declension of Judah, the prophet (1:1-4) complains of Jehovah's apparent indifference to his cry for the righting of the desperate conditions. Why does God suffer the wicked to compass the righteous to the perversion of the law and of righteous judgment? In God's answer (vs. 5-11) He reveals the speedy coming of the Chaldeans like a resistless simoon of the desert to overtake and destroy the despisers of His law.

2. Seeing that the Chaldean conqueror will impute his successes "unto his god," the prophet is excited to raise a second question touching God's equity (vs. 12-17): Why does God use for the punishment of His guilty people a still guiltier, even a heathen, power? To the waiting inquirer, who seems to realize the audacity of questioning God's ways, God replies in effect (Chapter 2), that the Chaldeans, who so ferociously trod down all nations, should at the appointed time be themselves trodden ruthlessly down.

In this part of the discussion some most important spiritual principles are brought into strong light.

a. "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith" (2:4).

The last part of this verse forms a link in a most remarkable historical chain of revelation concerning the essential condition of salvation. In Gen. 15:6, we read of Abram, "he believed in the Lord, and he counted it unto him for righteousness." This was nearly thirteen centuries before God answered Habakkuk, "the just shall live by his faith." Some seven centuries later still the Apostle Paul grounded his epistle to the Romans (1:17) upon these words in Habakkuk, and he confirmed that ground illustratively by quoting (4:3) the earlier word concerning Abram. And fifteen centuries later the words, "the just shall live by faith," flashed

out anew, through the soul of Martin Luther, the light of salvation by grace through faith, that has gladdened this dark world for four centuries just passed.

What further proof need we that salvation has been one and the same in all ages and for all peoples?

Now, the context in Hab. 2:4 is most valuable in helping us to understand this principle of salvation in its universal applicability. The verse presents two couplets of opposites. The first couplet of opposites is "lifted up" versus "faith"; the second couplet is "not upright" versus "just." The state of faith is opposite to the state of being "lifted up." And the state of "faith" makes one "just," while the state of being "lifted up" makes one "not upright." A third couplet of opposites is implied in the verse, one member of it only being introduced. The "just" shall live by his "faith," while the "not upright," it is implied, shall die because of being "lifted up."

At once we catch the truth that the universal condition of righteousness and of life is the humility of faith toward God, while the procuring cause of condemnation and of eternal death is the pride of unbelief toward God. Faith is humble dependence upon and confidence in God; while unbelief is proud independence and distrust toward God. The contrariety of vital relationship to God which this contrariety of heart-attitude toward God produces runs through all the warp and woof of the Bible. It is written in outstanding characters upon the page of Scripture and of universal experience, that "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Peter 5:5), and that "though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off" (Psa. 138:6).

Upon the basis of this original fundamental and inflexible principle God answered Habukkuk's question regarding the equity of God's dealing in using Babylon to chastise Judah; His purpose was to humble Judah

to her salvation and to inflate Babylon's pride to her destruction.

b. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (2:14).

The sense here does not appear to be a promise or a prediction, so much as the statement of a truth. It is to this effect: The ocean-fulness of the earth consists, not in the aims of human and national pride and glorying; its true fulness shall be found only by knowing the glory of the Lord.

We have already found how constantly God's purpose is to make us know that He is the Lord of earth as well as of heaven; and that this purpose is His justification in all His ways with men and nations. We know not how to read history aright if we overlook this motive of God in directing all human affairs. Habakkuk did not at first know how to trust God in the impending crisis or how to stand with God as a prophet and intercessor. Neither do we, unless we understand that all earthly conditions and mutations are subject to His will and hand to this end, that the glory of Christ shall be known in overflowing fulness. With what triumphant spirit the rightly informed and trustful watcher has been able to stand upon the wall during these recent years of mad strife!

c. "But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (2:20).

This is close in sense to the preceding. It may be taken prophetically in view of a visible appearance of Christ, the King of glory, in a literal millennial temple that is soon to be. Certainly, then will it be the only becoming thing for all the earth to keep silence before Him. And that visible appearing in the temple at Jerusalem in His heavenly and eternal glory will be necessary to secure due reverence in the earth before Him.

But it were a great mistake to think that anything

new will then occur, excepting in manifestation. We have only to remember Isaiah's vision of the Son of God in His glory in the invisible. We remember that three of the Twelve beheld the "majesty" of the Lord Jesus Christ when they "were with him in the holy mount." We remember the vision of the dying Stephen, the vision of the stout-hearted Saul of Tarsus, and the vision of the beloved Disciple on Patmos. This was a present revelation to Habakkuk, like the other revelations made to him. He needed to see the things invisible as a prophet of God; and so do we. In all our study of the prophecies of things to come in Christ Jesus, we have been learning, and should never forget, that all that is to be revealed visibly in Him has in all ages past been in Him invisibly to the natural eye, and yet open to the sight of the believing, holy heart. To such a heart "the Lord is in his holy temple," and such a heart will keep silence before Him—in true faith and loving adoration.

3. In Chapter 3:2 is the prayer of the prophet after hearing of God's momentous purposes. He seems to dread delay and the chastening process in reaching the rejuvenation of God's work among His people. His spirit was not yet at rest.

In verses 3-15 God gives such a panorama of His majestic tread through the nations—especially in the Exodus and the Conquest—for His people's salvation, as to leave the prophet done with all trembling and prepared to "rest in the day of trouble" (v. 16). Nay more! His spirit is filled with the rejoicing of enlightened faith in prospect of the awful scenes so soon to fill his beloved land: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat: the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God [Christ] is my

strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places" (vs. 17-19). What an illustration is this of the power and value of prophecy in such dark times as we are witnessing today!

IX. ZEPHANIAH.

This prophecy is dated in king Josiah's reign, 640-609 B. C. Zephaniah was the senior of Jeremiah. Quite likely it was through his spiritual help that the boy-king sought and found the God of his father David, and that he prepared himself for his zealous and effective reformation of the kingdom, which he found in such a debased and idolatrous condition following the long period of Manasseh's and Amon's reigns.

It is to be remembered that Josiah's reformation did not accomplish a real spiritual change in Judah, and that, after the good that God found in Josiah, the kingdom really plunged to its threatened doom all the more rapidly under the succeeding rebellious kings Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.

So, in Chapter 1, the prophet unsparingly threatens the kingdom with the sweeping judgment of the Babylonian captivity and of general desolation for their idolatry (vs. 2-7) and for their love of sensual luxury and of treacherous rule, (vs. 8-10). In verses 11-18 vivid description is given of the searching out of the wealth of the hardened business classes and of the desolating of the whole land. In 2:1-3 an earnest call is given to embrace the opportunity to avert the fierce anger of the Lord through diligent seeking for righteousness and meekness.

The rest of Chapter 2 pronounces the judgments which were to befall contemporaneous and neighboring nations under the same blow of the Babylonian conquest. It is the time of Nineveh's doom especially. All these nations are involved with Judah, only their punishment is more

especially because of their evil deeds towards God's people.

In Chapter 3:1-5 the final judgment is denounced upon Jerusalem as a filthy, polluted and oppressing city, and because of her extreme disobedience notwithstanding Christ's faithful presence in her midst in righteousness and judgment. In verses 6, 7, we may easily read the verdict of God upon the Jews of our Savior's time because, notwithstanding all the past judgments, especially upon the Gentile nations in their fall under the Roman conquest, the Jews had still gone on corruptly. This would, then, form a transition to the long waiting-time of this dispensation and to the crisis of the last days which is introduced with verse 8.

Verses 8-20 traverse ground that is now very familiar to us, although Zephaniah's picture is fresh in color and vivid in delineation:

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering."

"In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me? [Yes!] For then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of [in] my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

"Sing, O daughter of Zion: shout, O Israel: be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord [Jesus Christ], is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more."

“In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God [Jesus Christ] in the midst of thee is mighty: He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.”

“I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out: and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord [Jesus Christ].”

This surely is an inspiring comprehensive panorama of the preparation for and the inauguration of the millennial kingdom of Israel under the returning glorified Messiah, Jesus Christ, which fittingly concludes the succession of pre-exilic prophecies as made up in our Bible. It causes one's heart to bound with joyful, prayerful anticipation. But what would it mean, how could it be taken, had we not read the preceding prophecies in a simple, literal, self-evident sense, and did we not read this passage in the same way?

CHAPTER VI.

THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS, HAGGAI, ZECARIAH AND MALACHI.

CORRESPONDING to these three post-exilic prophetic books are the three post-exilic historical books, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

Ezra 1-6 narrates the return of the first and greater company of the exiles, after the lifting of their exile in Babylon by the decree of Cyrus the Great in 536 B. C. From these chapters it will be learned that, while Cyrus expressly authorized the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, yet at the first laying of the foundation amidst commingled shouting and weeping, trouble and hindrance sprang up from envious and malicious neighbors, who, when they found their connivings to be futile, carried to the Persian court damaging representations of the actual doings of the returned exiles. This political opposition paralysed progress, and finally an imperial prohibition of the work altogether was obtained from the second succeeding monarch. It was not until the second year of the next ruler, Darius the Great, B. C. 520, that the work got a full start: and it came to completion only in 515 B. C., twenty years after its commencement.

The matter of special interest and importance to our present course of study is, that the final, successful renewal and prosecution of the temple-building was due to the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah. They are introduced in Ezra 5: 1, 2 as the instruments of God in stirring up a revival and in helping forward the work, which was officially under the charge of the civil and ecclesiastical heads, Zerubbabel and Jeshua respectively.

A good opportunity is afforded us here to comprehend

more definitely the simple, but important, functions of the prophets of old. In Ezra 5:1 it says that Haggai and Zechariah "prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them." The next verse describes the purport and the effect of their preaching: "Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem"; and it is added, "and with them were the prophets of God helping them." "With them..... helping them." This was the office of the prophet of God, to incite to action by the message of God, and to help on the advancing work by further timely messages. The prophets were not official leaders or practical heads in the actual work, but they were "the oracles of God"—"helping." What important help!

Now it is in this light that we are called to read Haggai and Zechariah; we are to find in their messages the timely and helpful communications of God relative to the current conditions. And what is true of Haggai and Zechariah illustrates the principle of all prophecy and of its intelligent comprehension. It springs from existing circumstances and expresses the mind of God with reference to those conditions, whether by instruction, exhortation, rebuke, warning or consolation. Our understanding of prophecy depends upon our attention to existing circumstances with which the message deals. For the most part, narrative is given in the historical books of all circumstances lying at the base of the prophetic books of the Bible. This is why prophetic writers customarily introduce their books with reference to contemporaneous sections of the historical narrative.

While thus dependent upon Bible history for our understanding of Bible prophecy, yet generally the prophecy reflects to us the existing situation in fuller light, and especially in God's view of it. As has already been stated, there is also purely apocalyptic prophecy;

i. e., prophetic messages uttered in relation to circumstances, conditions and crises not yet at hand. In such cases there is, of course, no recorded history to be referred to; but our understanding of such prophecies is governed by the same principle. For we must first discern what coming circumstances and conditions the message is dealing with. We will always find that the prophecy simply takes its standpoint in the midst of the foreseen circumstances, and then deals with them just the same as if they belonged to the time of the prophet himself.

We must reiterate that no prophecy has a "double sense." There is no guess-work in understanding prophecy. There is no room for an "interpreter," saying, "It may be taken in this sense, or in this other sense." The Bible itself furnishes illustrations of applying a prophecy to other instances besides the one intended; but this is not as though it were an ambiguous prediction,—it simply means that the principle involved applies over and over. In Gen. 1:3 we read, "God said, Let there be light." We know just exactly what, and what only, that refers to. But we might justly say, with reference to the origin of the Reformation in Luther's experience, that "God said, Let there be light; and there was light." Neither is there use for borrowed "keys to interpretation." A prophecy means just what it says, just what it has to say regarding a particular matter in hand. It has its particular occasion, purpose and point, like an apt discourse of any God-sent preacher. The prophets were preachers. What sort of preacher would he be who had to be "interpreted" by some "keys,"—discovered like Joseph Smith's plates or Mrs. Eddy's "Key" to the understanding of the Bible—and who discoursed in such an ambiguous way as to be of uncertain, or of "double" meaning? In other words, a prophecy must be self-evident in sense, so that all readers will be able to see it assuredly for themselves in one and the same sense.

HAGGAI.

Turning now to Haggai, we find five messages, all given within a little less than four months' time in the second year of Darius the Persian king, 520 B. C.

1. The first message was given in the sixth month (Jewish), on the first day, 1:1-11. It was addressed first to the civil and religious heads (v. 1) concerning the unbelieving talk going on among the people, to the effect that the political conditions still existing under the new emperor did not favor renewing work on the temple (v. 2); then to the populace, rebuking them for living in good houses and leaving Christ's house desolate (v. 3), reminding them of the general bad times which they were having (vs. 5, 6), and exhorting them to get to building the temple for His pleasure and glory, and for the removal of the material adversities which were being the tokens of His displeasure and judgment, (vs. 9-11).

2. A message given twenty-three days later (1:12-15), recording the prompt beginning of the work and Christ's message to the people, "I am with you."

3. Another message twenty-seven days later, given to the rulers and the people (2:1-9). It relates to the disheartened argument of the old people, who were familiar with the magnificent first temple, and who were evidently urging that the present puny and mean house only showed that the Lord was not with them as of old and would not accept this little hut (v. 3). The message assures them that the Lord was still with them, to reside in their midst just as He promised when He ordered the building of the Tabernacle in the wilderness (Ex. 29:45, 46). Then follows the assurance (vs. 6-9) that this contemptible second temple should exceed Solomon's temple in glory, because in it should appear the One who is "the desire of all nations," and because

"in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."^{*}

4. A message given sixty-three days later (2:10-19). This message is at first very discouraging, as it indicates that the people, who represented those who had been cast out of the land for their uncleanness, were still ceremonially uncleansed, and that their land was still under the curse of barrenness as the existing unfruitfulness showed. That curse was laid upon the land, not when the captivity began, in B. C. 606, but when the final siege of Jerusalem began, in 589 B. C. For seventy years (sacred) the land was to enjoy the sabbatical years of which she had been deprived, 2 Chron. 36:10. But the expiration of this period exactly tallied with the day this message was given. The message, therefore, thus far so depressing, suddenly turns in the very last sentence to one of inspiring assurance in the words, "from this day will I bless you."

5. The last message, on the same day as the previous one (2:20-23). It is a message to the civil ruler Zerubbabel. It gives him assurance from the One who is omnipotent in the skies and in the earth, that He would disrupt all earthly powers, while He would take Zerubbabel, the least of earth's rulers, and make him "as a signet," even the Lord's "chosen." This was a most important message in the day when the imperial firman, forbidding all further work on the temple, was still in full force. Very speedily, however, as we learn from Ezra 7 and 8, the original decree of Cyrus was reaffirmed, and unqualified imperial favor and assistance were extended by Darius.

Note that Haggai's recorded messages cover a period of only 114 days, the very beginning of the revival.

^{*}While the temple in which our incarnate Lord appeared was called Herod's Temple, and while it was much more magnificent than the temple as built by the Jews of the Babylonian captivity, yet the temple was always considered and called the "Second Temple," because Herod only enlarged and embellished the original structure.

Haggai, as we see, well illustrates the place the prophets occupied in relation to public affairs of their day; and how easily we can understand the prophets, when we simply notice what conditions they are dealing with and the self-evident sense of what they have to say to those conditions. We will now go on to Zechariah, who was included in the statement in Ezra 5:2, "and with them were the prophets of God helping them."

ZECHARIAH.

Zechariah's first message, 1:1-6, was given just two months after Haggai's first message. But the next section, 1:7-6:15, is dated two months after Haggai's last, early in 519 B. C. Chapters 7 and 8 are dated at the very close of 518 B. C., while Chapters 9-14 are undated, because they are purely apocalyptic; i. e., not dealing with current events, but taking future standpoints as though they were present.

I. Special Timely Messages, Chapters 1-8.

1. The prophet calls upon the people to shun the disobedient ways of their forefathers lest the former should incur such expression of divine displeasure as God had recently visited upon the latter (1:1-6).

2. There follows a series of symbolical messages, dated 114 days later, which were intended to encourage the Jews at every point where their circumstances were calculated to dismay them (1:7-6:15).

(1). The vision of the Horses, the Horns and the Carpenters (1:7-21). This may reasonably be treated as one vision in three parts.

a. The Horses, (vs. 7-17). The man riding upon a red horse is called "The Lord" (v. 11), "The Lord of hosts" (vs. 12, 14, 17). This then was Christ. An "angel of the Lord," or of Christ, was spokesman to Zechariah. Christ was seen in charge of others upon "red horses, speckled

and white." The prophet asked, "what are these?" The angel answered that he would show what they were. Hence the explanation of verse 10 is clear and conclusive, showing that there were angelic forces invisibly traversing the earth under Christ's commission. Verse 11 adds their own declaration of what they had just been accomplishing in the earth; namely, the stilling of international affairs in obedience to the purpose of Him who had sent them forth. This purpose is developed, in vs. 12-17, to the prophet's understanding and for his announcement to the people at Jerusalem. It is to the effect that the indignation of the Lord manifested in the seventy years' captivity had been changed to jealousy for His city and house: "Therefore thus saith the Lord: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (vs. 16, 17).

b. The four Horns (vs. 18, 19). To the prophet's straight inquiry, "What be these?" the answer given is to be considered straight and sufficient. The horns are explained to be symbols of the powers which had scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. There were four just such political powers, Egypt, Syria, Assyria and Babylon.

c. The four Carpenters (vs. 20-21). It is explained that these carpenters were come to affright ("fray") "the horns [powers] of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn on the land of Judah to scatter it." Zechariah readily understood, and so do we, that these four carpenters, or builders, standing in decisive relation under Christ to the Gentile political powers, were none other than Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai and Zechariah, who were the civil, priestly and prophetic master-

builders of the new temple. The climax of the whole message is the assurance that through the return of Christ's mercy toward Jerusalem, and the turning of His indignation against the powers that had been hostile to His people, no political hindrance should any longer dare oppose the progress of the work on the temple.

An important thing for us to remember for light on later symbolism in the Scripture is, that, when the idea involved is that of Christ's sovereignty over political and military affairs in the earth, the symbol of earthly powers is the horn; when Christ is "*Lord of hosts*," those angelic hosts are symbolized by horses and their riders, and by chariots, and the Lord Himself is symbolized by a cavalry commander.

(2). Vision of the Man with the Measuring Line (Chapter 2). In 1:16 the promise had been given that "a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem." This pictures the act of surveying a plot with a view to its occupancy with residents; it is the act of an owner, who has the right to throw the plot open for settlement. In verses 1-5 the vision conveys the assurance of a new and overflowing peopling of Jerusalem under the divine protection and the favoring glory of the Lord. In vs. 6-9 the call of the Lord is thrown out to the exiles still remaining in the lands of their captivity to return. In verses 10-13 a most gladdening assurance is given of the Lord's taking up His presence and portion again in their midst at Jerusalem, now that He was again "raised up out of his holy habitation."

This assurance was fulfilled in successive emigrations of exiles back to Jerusalem; e. g., under Ezra, some sixty years later, and under Nehemiah's administration a little later still. How greatly the little flock already there needed this vision to induce them to plan for an extensive city for the future!

It may be well to give a moment's attention to two or three special expressions. "After the glory hath he sent

me unto the nations which spoiled you." The Lord here calls His remnant of Judah "the glory," which is to be recovered from the foreign spoilers. "I will shake mine hand upon them [the nations] and they shall be a spoil unto their servants [the Jewish captives]." "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day." This might lead us to introduce a confusion of interpretation at this point, as though this referred to millennial times. We need only remember how God turned the Gentile peoples of the Persian Empire in vast numbers as proselytes to Judaism in the days of Esther and Mordecai (Esther 8:17, 9:2).

(3). Vision of the investiture of Joshua (Chapter 3). Joshua the high priest of that day represented the people in their standing before God. He is first seen in the uncleanness of their standing, as was shown to Haggai. What a strong hold against them this afforded Satan as their malicious accuser before God! See Job 1:9-11. But Joshua's investiture with pure priestly attire proved the new, holy standpoint graciously given by God to the congregation. And Joshua is even made a type of the Messianic Priest who was to spring forth as a Branch from His people. How greatly the people needed this message of assurance concerning their holy standing before God and their continued possession of the covenant-promise of the Messiah!

(4). Vision of the Golden Candlestick and the two Olive Trees (Chapter 4).

As the previous vision gave special assurance of the divine approval of Joshua as high priest of a holy people, so this supplies the much-needed assurance of God's approval of the civil governor as His instrument for carrying the building of the temple through to successful completion.

Zerubbabel is represented as confronted by a "great mountain" (v. 7), which, however, shall fall flat before him. A mountain being a very common symbol of

earthly empire, this clearly means that before the governor of Jerusalem, so insignificant to human view, the mighty Persian Empire should, as it were, become like a plain, utterly unable to oppose him. And it is this that was implied in the foregoing words. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." It is shown that a leader is not needed of apparent worldly might to accomplish this great and perilous undertaking, but only one who is continually supplied with the Spirit and with the grace of God. So God pledges the finishing of the house by Zerubbabel who began it; but in such wise that the acclaim, when the headstone shall be placed, shall not be "Zerubbabel," but "Grace, grace unto it!"

But Joshua is also included with Zerubbabel in this vision as one of the "two anointed ones" represented by the two branches of the olive tree. The two, Zerubbabel and Joshua, stood by the Lord of the whole earth, and they were being supplied with more than human sufficiency, even as the two branches that sprang right out of the living olive tree constantly supplied the "two golden pipes" into which they merged. What blessed assurance this message was to the humble but faithful Governor, who could so easily doubt his own sufficiency and who could be so easily disparaged by those who saw in him no guaranty of success in an enterprise facing such tremendous odds!

"These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." This Lord is Christ. How much it meant in that day that Joshua and Zerubbabel were standing by Him! It brought them all His sufficiency of righteousness and power. While penning this paragraph, the writer was talking with a young widow, whose boy of twelve had excited the writer's remark upon his habits of prayer and of profitable reading. The mother, whose husband had died ten years before, thanked God for her boy's inclinations. She said that he had

recently taken up from Daniel the habit of praying three times daily. Her final remark was, "He has always stood by his mother." No wonder that the mother had been able to be everything possible to him. And this is the secret of strength and success for us, not primarily that we persuade the Lord to stand by us, but that we be ever found standing by Him. That will secure to us His sufficiency, no matter how lacking we may otherwise be.

(5). Vision of the Flying Roll and of the Woman in the Ephah (Chapter 5).

Here are two symbols, but they are directly related and may be taken in immediate connection with each other.

The flying roll had exactly the same dimensions as the pavement of judgment in the porch of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:3). And the roll has to do with the curse of the law upon evil-doing in business transactions, in fraud and false swearing. Assurance is given that God was clearing the remnant from all such offenses and offenders, so that they should not be liable now to the same curse which had befallen their fathers for these offenses.

The symbol of the ephah served to expand the same important provision against God's further curse upon the remnant for moral reasons. The ephah represented commercial matters. The woman in the ephah represented wickedness in commercial affairs, something that strongly characterized the Jewish forefathers. The removal of the whole symbol to the land of Shinar, to be "established, and set there upon her own base," indicated that God was treating all the past of commercial iniquities among His people as left behind in the land from whence it came. Thus God assured the remnant of their secure moral standing before Him. This was a much-needed stimulus.

(6). The vision of the Four Chariots (6:1-8).

The passage interprets itself, in answering the prophet's inquiry, "What are these, my Lord?" by explaining that the four chariots "are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth." This is, then, again a representation of Christ's operations in the earth by means of holy and mighty angels. The "north country" and the "south country," then, also indicate what is meant by the "two mountains—mountains of brass." They must mean the empire of Persia on the north, and the kingdom of Egypt on the south. The little remnant stood right between these great powers which God had already used in judgment upon His people, as implied by their being mountains of brass. But it is represented that through these angelic operations God's Spirit had found rest concerning His people so far as the north country, the Persian Empire, was to be considered. Egypt and the rest of the earth were offering no menace anyway just then. We can readily perceive what a timely and helpful message this would be to the trembling remnant, as they were stepping forth by faith, to build the temple right in the face of imperial prohibition, but in obedience to Christ's prophets.

(7). The symbol of the two Crowns (6:9-15).

We can scarcely realize the dispirited mind in which these Jews were laboring upon the temple, saving as these messages of God gave them joy and courage. This message is very sacred. It appears that four men of note, either of wealth themselves or bearing much treasure in their hands, had just arrived from Babylon. The prophet was bidden to go at once to the house of their entertainment, and to convert silver and gold which they brought into (two) crowns, which were then to be placed upon the head of Joshua, the high priest. The symbolical meaning of this is expressed thus: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts [Christ], saying, Behold, the man whose name is The Branch." That is,

wearing those crowns, Joshua stood as a type of "The Branch," meaning, of course, the Messiah of the Jews. Christ Himself, then, was pointing to Joshua as His very type. How inspiring! The matter is now amplified: "And he [the Messiah] shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the [millennial] temple of the Lord: and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both"; i. e., Christ shall exercise the two offices of Priest and King conjointly and in perfect harmony. What an inspiration to Joshua and all concerned, that he should not only be approved as high priest, but that he should be made a special type of the Messiah, even in the unique distinction of wearing at once the priestly miter and the royal crown! This would lend special sacred zest to the undertaking of building that second temple. This is what seems to be meant especially by the closing verse of the passage.

3. Instruction and promise concerning certain Fast Days (Chapters 7, 8).

The date of this passage supplies the key to its understanding. It was when they were about half way through building the new temple. Certain men came to worship and enquire at the house of God concerning a question that was evidently being acutely agitated. It concerned a fast which had been observed during the captivity and which commemorated the burning of the old temple "in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month" (Jer. 52:12). The question was whether it was not incongruous and unbecoming before God, to go on mourning over the destruction of the old temple when they had a new one before their eyes approaching completion. No doubt the very aged still felt like bemoaning the past; quite likely they argued that it was practical apostasy altogether to rejoice in the present. The question involved another fast also, that of the

"seventh month," which was in commemoration of the assassination of Gedaliah (Jer. 41:1), the governor first appointed by Nebuchadnezzar over the desolated land of Judah. But now they had a governor, one whom God was signally approving. How inappropriate to be wailing in his presence over a governor long ago dead and never any such man as Zerubbabel!

The question was first answered (7:6-14) by showing that God had never appointed or accepted those fasts, simply because they were wailings over calamities which were His judgments, long threatened upon their fathers, for sins which the exiles should have been deploring and renouncing, instead of merely bewailing their consequences before an indignant God.

But the Lord added a further answer, of a most inspiring character (Chapter 8). His judgment is now spent (vs. 2, 3); and by Jehovah's word Jerusalem is to be prospered again with many residents (vs. 4, 5). Although this seemed too marvellous in their eyes, yet it was very little in Christ's eyes, who looked forward to an ultimate regathering of His scattered people on a much vaster, and on a lasting scale (vs. 6-8). On this ground He exhorts them (9-15) most encouragingly to push forward the work of building under His abundant favor. So, instead of keeping up carnal wailings over the past calamities, they are directed to pursue the righteous ways (16, 17) which shall command the Lord's pleasure instead of provoking His hatred. Finally, in vs. 18-23, it is predicted that all four fasts, commemorating the most prominent disasters attending the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity, shall be converted into "cheerful feasts" in the day when finally restored Israel shall "love the truth and peace." That shall be a time when Israel, instead of being spoiled by the Gentile nations, shall be a magnet of attraction to all nations; and they shall come up to Jerusalem in great excursion companies, representing many neighboring cities, all for

this new purpose in the history of nations, "speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts," Jesus Christ, who shall then be reigning as King of the Jews. Instead of having to send forth missionaries far away to seek after wandering souls, "ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you"; i. e., in the person of the glorified and returned Christ.

This closes the messages of Zechariah which pertained most directly as immediate encouragements to the obstacles meeting the remnant from stage to stage along their way in building the temple. The last messages have, however, also begun to lift the eye upon the far more promising and glowing restoration of the far-distant future, and so they have prepared the way for the apocalyptical section of this wonderful book.

II. Apocalyptical Section, Chapters 9-14.

At once we realize that the situation now in view is not present but distant, not one that can be dated and referred to in the Biblical narratives, but one that must be described in the future through the prediction itself.

Chapter 9. In verses 1-7 a "burden," or judgment of God, is graphically portrayed in the form of an armed and destructive conquest covering familiar geographical territory, extending from Damascus of Syria to the cities in the southern plains of Philistia. But it is represented in verse 8, that by special divine intervention this conquest is deflected from sweeping over the city of God's house. Instantly, in verses 9, 10, the prophetic eye beholds the invisible Deliverer of this occasion materialized in the person of the Messianic King visibly appearing in the sacred city. This appearing is first in lowliness (v. 9), as was fulfilled when Jesus on Palm Sabbath rode in all meekness into Jerusalem on an ass's colt; and then in royal dignity (v. 10), when He shall come in

victorious deliverance of the Holy Land and City from overwhelming armed hosts. This final appearing is preparatory to His commanding all nations to resort to peace under the establishing of His own peculiar dominion "from sea to sea" (Mediterranean to Indian) and "from the river [Euphrates] to the ends of the [Biblical] earth"; i. e., clear to the confines of the Arabian Peninsula, as was promised to Abram, and as we have found in Ezek. 47:13-21 the borders shall be.

This coming deliverance from most critical peril is described at length in verses 11-17; and the peculiar feature is that it is represented as a signal victory of "the sons of Zion" over the "sons of Greece." We remember that in Dan. 8 and 11, especially the latter, very large place is given in the prophecy to Greece; extending from the invasion of Greece by Xerxes (11:2) to the rise and imperial conquest of Alexander the Great (vs. 3, 4; 8:4-8, 21, 22); then through the protracted rivalry between Egypt and Syria to Antiochus Epiphanes (11:5-35); and ending with the Anti-Christ as a Grecian usurper of the world-empire of the last days (11:36-45). To this agrees our passage in Zechariah 9, which represents the last great deliverance of Israel by the returning Christ as a matchless victory of the "sons of Zion" over the "sons of Greece."

Chapter 10. The last words of Chapter 9—"corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids"—introduced the material side of the millennial restoration of Israel, and this aspect is continued in 10:1. It is of even more than doubtful warrant to make of this verse a prediction of spiritual Pentecosts in our day, or at all. Verses 2-4 reach back for connection to 9:16 and continue the picture of what Christ, as the Good Shepherd, will do for the remnant of Israel as His flock. A plain outline is continued in verses 5-12 of Israel's victory over the great foe of the last days (v. 5), the uplifting of both members of the holy people with

more than pristine prowess (vs. 6, 7), the multiplication of Israel's children while yet in dispersion in the latter days (8, 9), and their restoration to their own land (vs. 10-12).

Chapter 11 clearly concerns itself with the judgment of God upon the false rulers of His people Israel. After introducing such judgment in verses 1-6, the Lord promises Himself to feed the spiritually "poor of the flock." Through the further development of the matter in hand by the allegory of the two staves—Beauty and Bands—it becomes apparent that the judgment of God upon the false rulers first introduced relates to those of Christ's day. His own betrayal for "thirty pieces of silver" makes this plain. The judgment consists especially in His rupture (v. 10) of covenant relations with the people, and of the rupture of national brotherhood (v. 14). The consequences stand before our eyes in the state of the Jews throughout the present dispensation since the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. Verses 15-17 carry us down to the rule of an "idol shepherd"; i. e., that most unworthy, though universally worshipped ruler, the coming Anti-Christ, and to the Lord's visitation of final judgment upon him.

Chapters 12-14. "That Day" is the key-note of this stupenduous panoramic forecast of the final events which will usher in the millennial times.

The impressive words of introduction in 12:1 center our attention upon solemn judgment "for Israel"; i. e., in behalf of the whole nation; and prepare us for something momentous because of proceeding from "the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." The purport of the prediction is stated in verse 2 to be the avenging of Jerusalem against the final besieging hosts of the Anti-Christ: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem."

Verses 3-9 depict the victory of Israel over the international hosts,—“though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it”—the victory of the chiefs through the godly support of the people, the Lord’s care for the honor of the house of David and His irresistible overthrow of all nations found in active hostility against Jerusalem.

Verses 10-14 describe the coming repentance of the remnant of the Jews under the power of “the Spirit of grace and of supplications,” coupled with the reappearing of Him whom their forefathers pierced. This is one of the most conclusive passages to use in convincing Jews today that their coming Messiah is none other than the crucified Nazarene.

Verse 1 of Chapter 13 properly belongs to the last paragraph of Chapter 12. It shows that in “that day” the fountain of Jesus’ blood, the blood of Him whom they had “pierced,” should be opened up to their view for effectual application.

Verses 2-6 give a marvellous picture of the cleansing process by which the last vestige of ungodliness, whether of idolatry or of false prophesying, shall be removed from Christ’s Holy Land; and again the wounded One, “wounded in the house of his friends,” is presented as the object of their repentance.

Verses 7-9 base themselves upon the former smiting of the “Good Shepherd” and the consequent age-long dispersion of the Israel-flock, and upon the final, conclusive tribulation of Jacob, by which two-thirds of the resident Israel of the Holy Land will be destroyed, while the Lord “will turn his hand [favorably] upon the little ones”: “And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.”

Chapter 14 presents the climax of “the day of the

Lord," the day of Israel's recompense against her assembled enemies.

Verses 1-3 depict the descending Christ's rescue of Jerusalem when at the very point of utter destruction: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle: and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished: and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle" (Josh. 10:14).

In verses 4-11 a wondrous description is given of Christ's visible arrival from heaven upon Mount Olivet, —with angels and resurrected saints, as the "one Lord" and only "King over all the earth"—and of the physical changes to be then wrought upon the face of the Holy Land. "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; . . . and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. . . And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea [probably the Red Sea] and half of them toward the hinder sea [the Mediterranean]; in summer and in winter shall it be.* And the Lord shall be King over all the earth, in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one . . . And men shall dwell in it [Jerusalem], and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

In verses 12-15 it is shown that the manner in which the Lord will destroy the hosts of Anti-Christ will be by a

*This seems to represent the outbursting of subterranean waters in such abundance as to create two great rivers by which Jerusalem can be approached from both directions by world-wide commerce.

plague which will consume men and beasts in their very tracks. Confusion will arise in the armies in which they will draw the sword one against another, and the heartened remnant of Israel will boldly and effectively swoop down upon the melée and gather up a great spoil from the evacuated tents of the enemy.

Verses 16-19 introduce us into the millennial order of international conditions and relations. "And it shall come to pass, that every one [nation] that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem." This shows that Christ will determine the millennial destiny of all nations upon His arrival, and that especially will He sit in judgment upon all nations that participate in the last assault upon the Holy Land and Jerusalem; some will be spared to continue nationally and governmentally, while others will be dissolved. (This judgment scene is also depicted in Matt. 25:31-46.) And it will be required of every nation that is spared to "even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, [Jesus Christ] and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles." That is, every nation of millennial times will be obliged to go up representatively every year to the world-capital, Jerusalem, there to worship in the visible presence of the glorified Christ. This will be the fulfilling of the type of the old Feast of Tabernacles. Passover has been fulfilled, and so has Pentecost; but Tabernacles, the preëminent feast of the annual cycle, is yet to be fulfilled as just described. The further verses of this paragraph describe the punishments which Christ will employ to compel unwilling nations to keep this order. This indicates that earthly nations will not be altogether hearty in submission to millennial order.

Verses 20, 21 describe the universally holy and consecrated condition of Jerusalem and Judah (not of the world generally) in the millennial age, and their freedom from the presence of any defiling or alien elements.

MALACHI.

Before concluding with this book our study of Old Testament prophecy, we should bring out the post-exilic history which lies between Malachi and the two preceding post-exilic prophets, Haggai and Zachariah.

We learned that the two latter prophesied in connection with the final stage of building the "Second Temple," during the years from 520 to 515 B. C. Now, between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra lies an interval of 57 years, from 515 B. C., the sixth year of Darius the Great, to 458 B. C., "the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king" (of Persia), who reigned from 465 to 424 B. C. It was in this king's seventh year that Ezra himself first went up to Jerusalem, with another large company of returning exiles (Ezra 7:7).

His commission was "to beautify the house of the Lord.....in Jerusalem" (7:24). This purely religious commission befitted a purely religious personage like Ezra, "a ready scribe in the law of Moses." There seems to have been no special need for material and political improvement; for, in the prayer of Ezra recorded in the ninth chapter, we have the then existing physical and political condition thus described, in v. 9: "God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Jerusalem." Notice particularly that the old desolations of the city had been effaced, the city was again walled in, and full imperial favor was being enjoyed.

But now notice very particularly what contrary physical and political conditions were existing only thirteen years later—the "twentieth year" of Artaxerxes—when the story of Nehemiah begins (Neh. 1:1). "Hanani," says Nehemiah, "one of my brethren, came,

he and certain men of Judah: and I asked them concerning the Jews *that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem*. And they said unto me, *The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire*" (1: 2, 3). This report caused Nehemiah to sit down and weep, to mourn for some days, to fast and to pray "before the God of heaven."

It is perfectly evident that there had been a recent assault of Jerusalem, under which very many lives had been sacrificed and from which only a remnant of the returned captivity was left, who were in pitiful distress and political derision, while the city lay desolate, with its wall broken down and its gates burned with fire. It was this condition remaining from some recent disaster—not the condition greeting the exiles who returned 91 years before—that threw Nehemiah into this agitation and extreme engagement of intercession before God.

Are we left to futile conjecture for an explanation of this state of affairs at Jerusalem? Is there no Scriptural clew to this evidently official visitation to Nehemiah from Jerusalem? Manifestly they came to report on the situation there and to enlist his powerful influence, not only at the court of heaven, but also at the Persian court, where he, though a Jew, was one of the highest and most trusted dignitaries, even "the king's cup-bearer" (1: 11).

In answering this inquiry, let it be asked why the Bible includes the Book of Esther. Is it merely to furnish an unrelated narrative of a remarkable deliverance of the Jews from the net of a political destroyer? We make bold to suggest, almost with unqualified assertion, that the deplorable condition of Jerusalem, which furnished occasion for the whole course of things re-

lated in Nehemiah, is intended by the inspiring Spirit to be explained by the fascinating drama of Esther.

The name of the king, Ahasuerus, is not personal but official, like Pharaoh, the official name of the kings of Egypt. While he is commonly identified with Xerxes, the father of Artaxerxes, yet the name is just as applicable to the latter. While it is usually thought that the unparalleled magnificence and costliness of the festival furnished by Ahasuerus (Esther 1) points to Xerxes, whose wealth was fabulous, yet what could be more natural than that his son, the inheritor of his estate as well as of his throne and empire should signalize the early stage of his reign ("In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants"—Esther 1:3) by a vainglorious display of his patrimony and his power?

It was in the twelfth year of Ahasuerus (Esther 3:7) that Haman devised his plot to exterminate the Jews throughout the Persian Empire. Supposing Ahasuerus to have been Artaxerxes, this would be five years after Ezra went up to Jerusalem, there to find things materially and politically as recorded in Ez. 9:9. It was nearly two years later that Haman's decree went into execution. This would leave five years or so to the opening of the train of events narrated in Nehemiah.

Now, where in all the realm of Persia would the assault upon the Jews be naturally so venomously and advantageously undertaken as at Jerusalem, where the Jews were especially feeble and defenseless, and where they were surrounded by powerful neighbors, who held them in extreme spite and hostility, as the Scriptural history shows? It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that, although the Jews at Jerusalem escaped extermination, yet but a remnant "of the captivity" should be left, and those in just such condition of desolation, reproach and danger as the narrative indicates.

Already five or six years had elapsed, and the dis-

heartened exiles had been too prostrate to restore even the former conditions, to say nothing of securing themselves against a repetition of their calamity. But this was the psychological hour for the strongest possible influence to be exerted at the Persian capital. Esther herself, a known Jewess, had risen from the position of the king's sweetheart to that of his imperial consort. To her foster-cousin, Mordecai, had been given the vast estates of Haman and unwonted dignity and power even for the Prime Minister of an oriental despot. Esther 10:2 speaks of "the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him." And the next verse reads: "For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed," the Jews. And Nehemiah as cupbearer was trusted with the very life of the king from day to day. It was the opportune time to seek for Jerusalem not merely a restoration to her former condition; but, besides restoring her to a condition of strong self-defense physically, to obtain for her a political status in the Empire which would make all unwarrantable hostility against her an imperial offense. She needed to be given a Hebrew governorship of full imperial authority. It is the establishing of just this status of dignity and safety as an autonomous Hebrew State that is made the starting point of the "seventy weeks" of Daniel as the remaining period of the political history of the Jews under Gentile sovereignty.

And it was the Jewish New Year of 445 B. C. (Neh. 2:1), when Nehemiah for the first time betrayed a sad countenance before the king. It touched the heart of this despot with whom God had already so remarkably dealt; for the king saw that it was "nothing else but sorrow of heart" (2:2). But what had most weight under God with the king in favorably considering Nehemiah's plea—"why should not my countenance be sad,

when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire"—is betrayed by the little parenthetical memorandum in v. 6: "And the king said unto me, [*the queen also sitting by him*], For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time." "So it pleased him." It was evidently due to the approving expression of "the queen also sitting by him." Can any one doubt that Esther was that queen? Most likely this was a special state affair, in recognition of the Jewish New Year, and for the special pleasure of the beloved Jewish queen and the honored Jewish Minister of State. This grant of the king was the climax of the favor for His dispersed people which Christ obtained from the Persian kings. And this whole chain of events lifts Artaxerxes into rank with the great Gentile rulers of former days—Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus—as the divinely chosen instrument of momentous illustrations of heavenly rule in behalf of Israel while in subordination to Gentile dominion.

That this romance is not a fanciful conception, and that Esther and Artaxerxes are to be considered the controlling actors in this wondrous working of Christ in behalf of His degraded, but not disowned, people, is confirmed—perhaps put beyond doubt or dispute—by a paragraph which we find in a work entitled "Universal History on Scriptural Principles," p. 100 (Samuel Baxter and Sons, London, 1844): "Artaxerxes was surnamed Longimanus on account of his arms; for it is said that his hands touched his knees when he was standing. The Persians called this king Ardeshir [a variation of the name Artaxerxes] Dirazdest, or long-handed; and they say that he married a beautiful damsel, named Esther, whom he found among the Jewish captives." This appears to be reliable historical evidence that Artaxerxes Longimanus of the book of

Nehemiah is the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. Josephus also makes Esther the wife of Artaxerxes (Book XI. Chapter 6).

From the Book of Nehemiah we learn how this noble, energetic and pious governor speedily placed Jerusalem, in spite of the most harassing machinations of envious and malicious neighboring provinces, in a state of physical comfort and security, of order and prosperity in municipal and social respects, of dignity and respect before the world, and, above all, of acceptance and favor before God. His leave of absence as governor of the new province and commonwealth was for twelve years. After spending some years at court in Shushan, Nehemiah was permitted to return to Jerusalem, when he found the people badly backslidden religiously and needing drastic measures of reformation. He must have held control of affairs down to about a quarter-century before Malachi calls us to hear Christ's closing Old Testament prophecy to His Hebrew commonwealth. The interval of but one generation had sufficed for the Jews to come again, notwithstanding all the fresh wonders of divine favor and help that had been written into their national history, into a state of serious declension such as is reflected in the Book of Malachi.

The conjectural date of Malachi, 397 B. C., is very significant, being the exact end of the "seven weeks" of Daniel 9:25, the first point of division in the "seventy weeks." The book is marked by a series of reproaches from Christ upon His people, and their surly rejoinders.

1. Chapter 1:2-5. He reproaches them with forgetfulness of His love. They insolently counter-question all evidence of the same. He proves it by His historic reference to Jacob and Esau. At last the admission shall be evoked from them, "The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel."

2. Chapter 1:6-2:9. Two reproaches are here cast

against the priests. First, Christ as their King reproaches them for polluting His royal table with contemptible offerings (1:6-14). Resenting such disrespect, Christ takes occasion to predict a time when around the whole globe His name shall be magnified by the Gentiles and pure offerings shall be presented to Him (v. 11). In part this is fulfilled in the present dispensation; but in the renewed earth, beyond millennial times, this will be perfectly fulfilled (2 Pet. 3:13). Secondly, Christ reproaches the priests for gross delinquency in administering the law (2:1-9). Important light is here thrown for us upon the ideal office of the priest. "My covenant was with him of life and peace; . . . The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they [the people] should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." How pertinent this is to the Lord's ministers today!

3. Chapter 2:10-16. The Lord here reproaches His people for falling again into mixed and forbidden marriages, marrying "the daughter of a strange god," even to the extent of putting away the Jewish wife of one's youth to embrace the fair form of an idolatrous Gentile. Verse 12 intimates that this was practiced by clergy and laity alike. But this course is pronounced to be treachery and profanation toward the covenant and the holiness of the Lord; and it had brought proofs of His extreme disfavor. Yet, instead of repenting, the guilty were insolently raising the question against God's dealing, "Wherefore?" This brought the Lord's witness against a practice which is not unknown in His Church today, that of dealing "treacherously" with the "wife of thy youth" by getting free from her—the "companion" for life and "the wife of thy covenant"—for another that entices the fleshly admiration, but who can

never be to one more than a woman and a concubine. Verse 15 propounds in most important terms the true nature and purpose of a Christian's marriage: "did he not make one . . . And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed." No wonder that Christ "hateth putting away" (v. 16), and that He earnestly warns His people of all times: "Take heed to thy spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." Godly wedlock conditions godly posterity.

4. Chapters 2:17-3:6. The Lord here charges them with conduct which despises Him and practically denies Him as a "God of judgment," as though "one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord." It is a case of doing evil in denial of Him as a God of judgment.

The Lord's answer to the matter is a sharp warning of the unsparing judgment which He will in due time execute among His people. The promise is made (3:1) of Christ's coming suddenly—according to the proclamation of His messenger John the Baptist—as heaven's "Messenger of the covenant." It is the invisible Christ personally declaring His sudden visible coming. And, although it is He "whom ye delight in"; i. e., professedly, yet His coming will be of a nature to "reveal the thoughts and intents of the heart," with a view to refining and purifying the sons of Levi, "that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This was fulfilled in its measure at Christ's first coming by the searching fire of His word; and it will be perfectly fulfilled by the more fiery testing of His second coming. It is, therefore, not true that He is no longer "the God of judgment," but it is due to His remaining the patient God of His covenant people that the unworthy "sons of Jacob are not consumed" long since.

5. Chapter 3:7-12. Here the charge of the Son of God against His faithless people is that of robbing Him

of the appointed tithes and of the votive offerings of gratitude and of trust in Him the Giver of all good things. In consequence, His curse—of drought, various pests, and other causes of loss—was upon field, orchard and vineyard. But He promises to prosper most lavishly if they will only prove Him by wholehearted obedience in this matter. The time is coming when, because of the prosperity of the Holy Land, the assurance will be fulfilled, "And all the nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts"—Christ, the Son of God, their King and our Savior.

6. Chapters 3:13-4:6. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy: yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered" (3:13-15).

Of course, this means that their contrary conduct implies these accusations against God for lack of equity in rewarding virtue and recompensing wickedness. The reply is, that time will prove that the pious are held in loving remembrance by the Lord, and that a clear discrimination will be made apparent to all between those who fear Christ and think upon His name and those who serve Him not (3:16-18).

But, just as all foregoing Scripture has shown, the time of decisive expression of judgment waits for "that day," which prophecy has been faithfully holding before all generations in warning from Enoch down. Before that day of destructive judgment, however, it is promised—as the last word of Old Testament Scripture—that Elijah the prophet shall come to renew the people in righteousness, so that Christ's first coming

may not be with the curse (4:1-6). That this last word was certainly fulfilled in the coming and ministry of John the Baptist is made plain by Christ's own words in Matt. 11:14, 17:12 and Luke 1:17.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHRIST OF THE AGES.

BEFORE closing the Old Testament section of our study, a special treatment of whole subject will be timely. The subject will be treated in two sections.

1. CHRIST IN OLD TESTAMENT AGES.

The presentation of Christ the Son of God throughout Old Testament revelation has quite likely seemed to be obtruded and stressed in the foregoing pages. But there is special need to unveil the person of God's Son from Old Testament pages, because there is in the present day very commonly a blindness to Him therein. Not that there is so great a degree of blindness to Christ in the types and prophecies of the Old Testament—although with respect to His coming a second time as literally as the first time there is quite widespread blindness still today; but, that there is little perception of His known personality and presence on every page of Old Testament narrative, prophecy and song, it is not too much to assert.

The exposition of the known person, presence and activity of Christ throughout the Old Testament times, which runs through the pages now left behind us, may have seemed to be a matter of opinion and private interpretation, of theory more or less doubtful. It may not be rash to say that the idea widely prevails that the saints of old were practically unitarian,—at least so far as regards a clear distinction of three divine persons; and that the Son of God was unrevealed to them in distinct person and presence.

It is not to be disputed that the immanence of the

Son of God was lost from the perception of mankind in general, or that even the Old Testament saints—just as believers today—were continually tending to lose the vision of Him. But, the point here maintained is, that our Christ was the very same unincarnate in the yesterday of the Old Testament times; that especially was He the one person of the Godhead who was directly manifest in person and activity in those times; that to the saints of old He was the Christ, the Anointed of God; and that the One who was promised to them to appear in the flesh was the very One already revealed to them spiritually.

These facts the New Testament, so far from denying or leaving conjectural, is very strong in asserting. The *crux* of the whole question who Jesus of Nazareth really was, was voiced, for instance, by the high priest Caiaphas in his urgent demand upon Jesus, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 26:63). Again, as a sample of positive declaration, Paul reasoned on three successive Sabbaths with the Jews out of the Old Testament Scriptures, "opening and alleging that Christ must have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus . . . is Christ" (Acts 17:1-3). It was not necessary to teach of such a person as Christ the Son of God; every instructed Jew knew and admitted that Paul was making no new disclosure (excepting to ignorant Gentiles), when he taught that the Israelites of old "did all drink of the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). The point to be proved in those days was that Christ, who was already well known as the Son of God, was as Son of man to be crucified and raised again, and that the crucified and risen Jesus was that One. We do not read our New Testament aright any more than our Old Testament if we do not clearly perceive these things.

The whole matter is remarkably set forth in a New Testament biography of Christ, as Son of God in His pre-incarnate career. This is found in John 1:1-13. These few verses present Christ's pre-incarnate career after the following outline:

1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (vs. 1, 2).

This presents the eternal side of Christ's career, prior to "the beginning" of time and of creature existence, prior to all things else but God, in whom there was no beginning, and in whom there can be no possible ending. Eternally Christ, the Word, was "with God"; i. e., in association and communion,—“the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the father.” “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. . . Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him” (Prov. 8:22, 23). Here is disclosed the secret of the eternal rapturous enjoyment and satisfaction in God's own existence: it consisted, not in a solitary self-complacency, but in the ineffable inter-communion of the Trinity.

And mark that John calls Christ by that significant name, "the Word." In all eternity Christ was the Word-God. That means that in His deity Christ ever is the divine Person to give expression and communication of the otherwise unknown and unknowable Deity, even as the word from the mouth is the communication of the otherwise unknown thought of the mind. Hence Christ must everywhere be the One who is in evidence whenever it is God in utterance, in action, in communication, in revelation.

2. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (v. 3).

This takes up the career of Christ down "in the beginning," in time, in creative ages. Time and creation

do not add to His existence; they occur within His eternity. But, to the finite mind, this marks a further stage of Christ's career, the stage of His creative occupation. So then, if any one particular person of the Trinity is to be perceived in the first utterance of the Bible (Gen. 1:1), that person is the Son of God, the Christ of all the Bible. And, as we saw way back there in our study, the creative times reach back to an undated past, perhaps to a past which finite mind could not comprehend if it were stated in figures by God who alone knows when it was. It is not pertinent for us here to go into the vast range of fact opened up by this verse; suffice it to say, that all creature existence subsists to show forth, not God, speaking indefinitely, but Christ personally and particularly. "All things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:16, 17).

Still another aspect of Christ flashes upon one's mind from those words, "All things were made by him." The preposition "by" implies not that Christ was the originator of creation, but that He was the mediator thereof; for the preposition includes as its chief thought the idea of mediumship. And this suggests the reflection that Christ as the Word of God is God's mediator by virtue of distinctive personality and office, and not just by executive appointment. He did not become a creative mediator by virtue of His act of creation; He was such by virtue of His being and of His place in the Trinity. Actual creation was but a way of expressing God through Christ. Hence, all creation was eternally prospective and potential in and through Christ. Thus He was the divine Mediator of man's creation, not by virtue of the historic act, but by virtue of His very divine being. Man was in Christ prospectively and potentially from eternity. And even the redemption of the fallen man was not an after-thought or provision. The redemptive mediatorship of Christ

belonged to Him eternally; so that He did not become the Lamb of God first when physically crucified. Christ came into the world as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). Fallen man's redemption was actual and potential as soon as needed, because of its being eternal in Christ as the mediatorial Son of God. Hence, the animal sacrifices were not merely types of a coming visible sacrificial act, but they were signs, symbols, representations of the existing, present, eternal Lamb of sacrifice Himself.

3. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (v. 4).

To speak after the finite, this brings the career of Christ down into the time of created man. The self-existent Christ was and ever is the moral and spiritual light of man.

Can this imply less than that the newly created man, the unfallen pair, walked in living light within and without,—in the most perfect acquaintance and communion with Christ, the Son of God? Such was Adam's being, such his acquaintance with and understanding of Christ his Creator—his Life and his Light—that he could denominate all forms of animal life by names that embodied the revelation which Christ their creator had expressed in them. What an ideal existence was that of the first human pair as, with an illuminated being which rendered their perceptions instant, intuitive and perfect, they walked and they talked with their Lord Christ evening by evening in the Garden of Eden, until it was invaded by the prince of darkness clothed as an angel of light!

4. "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (v. 5).

Suddenly we enter the period of fallen mankind, the time of the eclipse of Christ as the Light of men, the time when spiritual darkness in man not only caused him to hide himself from that Presence of light, but

even resolutely kept Christ extinguished from inner knowledge and outer perception.

To this period of Christ's career belongs also vs. 6-10. The introduction of the testimony of John the Baptist at this point does not imply that we are already in this outline down in his day. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, that all men through him might believe" (vs. 6, 7). The words "that all men through him [the Baptist] might believe," are related to verse 5, and they indicate the earnest effort and practical measures employed by Christ, the immanent Light, to gain illuminating entrance into man through faith. "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (vs. 8, 9). This emphasizes the fact that never could there be found for darkened man any true light but Christ.

Verse 11 comes back to and carries forward v. 5, "The Light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Marvellous grace, and abominable requital of grace! The grace is displayed in the fact that Christ, the Light of men shone right on in His love to man, although under eclipse. The dreadful requital of His grace is that a human soul should give no moral or spiritual entrance to the immanent Light of his being. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Although no longer efficiently the Light of men, filling their being spiritually and vitally, yet He abides at the center of man's being, to shine within and to shine away all inward darkness. This is true for every man born into the world; Christ, his only and his "true Light," faithfully, lovingly seeks to shine forth within and illuminate the whole being with eternal life. Oh, what a message to carry to all men! Oh, what a pity that men are groping afar for light, when the "true Light" waits to break forth within any willing responsive heart!

"He was in the world," (v. 10). Shall we longer dispute the phrase, "Christ in the Old Testament"? Why was He persistently in the world, and for what? Why? Because "the world was made by him"; He never forsook His creation and never will He. For what? "And the world knew him not." He was there for the world to know Him. But, Alas! "Knew Him not" implies more than excusable ignorance,—it means refusal to know Him; it means rejection of the Light's inward entreaty; it means the scornful, "I don't know you, Sir!"

5. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," (v. 11).

This brings Christ's pre-incarnate career down to the time of His taking out of the world a chosen portion as "His own" people. It is not His coming in the flesh to Israel, nineteen hundred years ago; but it refers to His coming in that wondrous presentation of Himself to Israel, which He made in advancing stages from His first visit to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees down to His covenants with Israel through Moses and David. But, here again is shocking requital of His grace: "And his own received him not." These six words crystallize and epitomize Israel's history from the golden calf to Golgotha. Christ unincarnate was rejected and crucified of Israel before Christ incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth was nailed to the tree.

6. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power [liberty] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (vs. 12, 13).

This still belongs to Christ's pre-incarnate times. A careful perusal of vs. 1-18 cannot fail to convince one that John's introductory personal testimony to Christ, as He was revealed to the beloved disciple, passes at v. 14 from Christ's pre-incarnate manifestations of Him-

self to His self-manifestation in the flesh. It is the same person and in the same character as the Word, the revealing and self-revealed God.

Verses 12 and 13, therefore, constitute a summary statement of the aim and of the success of Christ in His pre-incarnate relations to mankind. It shows that His aim was to bring children into His Father's family, and it shows that in this aim He was not without success, either in His dealings with mankind in general, or in His dealings with Israel in particular. Through all the ages and all the stages of culpable spiritual darkness, from Adam to Jesus, some souls were receiving Him, putting trust in Him, admitting Him as the Light of life within them. To all such, whether antediluvian or post-diluvian, Gentile or Jew, He gave entrance by regeneration into His Father's family. From Adam down to Jesus Christ God was making up His family of newborn sons of fallen men. Christ was forming His body and His Church throughout the old dispensation on the same principles of Spirit-wrought repentance and faith, justification and regeneration, as He has done since He died on the Cross.

We would not overlook the fact that we obtain our clearest light on the doctrine of man's need of spiritual new birth from the words of Jesus to an ecclesiastic of the Mosiac dispensation (John 3:1-17). When Jesus reprovingly asks Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things" (of the new birth), we are most conclusively shown that the new spiritual birth is an Old Testament truth and experience, and that it was as much the message for the Old Testament preacher and teacher to press as for the preacher and teacher of the New Testament.

Worthy introduction is this brief sketch of Christ's preincarnate career to the book, in which John introduces Jesus as the fleshly manifestation of "the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father," and through-

out which the bitter controversy between belief and disbelief in personal relationship to Christ, the Son of God, the only Light of life to man, is portrayed, as that controversy centered about the person of Jesus of Nazareth. This introduction puts into our hands the key to the right understanding of all the Old Testament, to the unity of the Old and the New Testaments, and to the unity of believers of all ages as one indivisible spiritual body in Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, the one and only Saviour, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

A personal testimony may be excusable at this point. Some years ago the author began to pray for the belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God that seemed to him to be implied in 1 John 5:5: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" In course of time the writer began to notice how blessedly and increasingly his Saviour was coming to be revealed to him as the Son of God throughout the Old Testament; and ere long he discovered that this was the quite unexpected, but most eminently satisfactory, way in which his prayer was being answered.

II. IDOLATRY IN OLD TESTAMENT AGES.

We have just been tracing the painful and shameful exhibition of human resistance to Christ, the Light of Life, throughout the Old Testament times, finding consolation nevertheless in the fact that all the time, and from all sides, Christ was yet finding some hearts in which to shine.

When we see how that Satan was the procuring cause of the fall of mankind, we should not be surprised to find that this enemy to Christ had a counterfeit ready to take His place in human hearts as the light of life. This is the whole significance of idolatry in olden times. The human heart must have its object of trust and devotion, its religious light, true or false. Idolatry was

Satan's substitute for every heart that he could keep seduced from, or ignorant of, Christ the true Light. This explains why Christ so urgently warned Israel against the idols of the heathen, why such drastic penalties were appointed for the sins of idolatry, and why idolatrous practices and influences worked such speedy and profound harm among the children of Israel.

Fortunately we have a remarkable Scriptural counterpart to John 1:1-13 for our study of the present side of the subject. This passage is found in Rom. 1:18-32, which we will now take up with careful study.

The unity of the Old and New Testament dispensations, as alike times of salvation and that on the same terms; namely, justification by faith, is clearly shown in Rom. 1:17. Here the definition and the authentication of the gospel principle on which this great Epistle is founded are borrowed from the Old Testament in a quotation from Habakkuk: "The just shall live by faith." This principle was presented in Habakkuk as God's original and universal criterion for deciding the life-destiny of souls. Hence this grace was as universally in force in Old Testament times as now; and this corresponds to John's words: "But as many as [then] received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." From this evangelical standpoint of Old Testament times the further verses of Rom. 1:18-32 are to be read,—verses which portray the ever deepening stages of the darkness of the Gentile world which refused Christ as the Light of Life more and more obstinately.

1. Verses 18-20: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,

even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

The wrath of God here spoken of as revealed from heaven is against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men that is maintained by holding the truth which they have, in knowledge, in unrighteousness of life. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." "He was in the world,.....and the world knew him not." Very plainly and emphatically do verses 19, 20 assert the fact that the heathen world, apart from the Scriptures, was amply supplied with "that which may be known of God." For Christ "hath showed it unto them."

Note, therefore, that full-orbed revelation is not an evolution from the faintest glimmer of light, if any at all; but that, "from the creation of the world," "the invisible things of him.....are clearly seen." The revelation of "the deep things of God" was perfect, then, to begin with. It is most striking, that what is generally called "natural revelation," or revelation in nature and its works, and what is generally supposed to be a very imperfect sphere and medium of revelation, is here pronounced ample, and clear to vision and understanding. It shows what a vivid and legible book of revelation creation originally was and long continued to be. It shows that creation was originally a transparency of the Son of God. No doubt the face of Christ is still peering upon man benignantly through the lattice of the creature-world; but how blind even the saints are to this theophany of our Beloved! We may well pray that our eyes may be opened to see His face before us everywhere in the outer world, notwithstanding creation is so marred by the galling bondage under which it all lies.

2. The last paragraph closed with the words, "so that they are without excuse." Man is charged with being, not only inexcusable for spiritual darkness, but

also culpable for it. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God neither were thankful" (v. 21). This is just what called forth the revelation of the wrath of God from heaven. Here again, "God" is God in Christ the Son, who ever "hath declared him." Men, like Cain, culpably refused Christ the acknowledgment and honor of deity and the gratitude due Him as Redeemer, Saviour and Lord.

3. Watch now the results! Mark the down-grade of the despisers and ingrates!

(1). "They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (v. 21).

Imagination is the faculty of inward apprehension, the faculty which renders men capable of apprehending divine revelations. "Vain" means empty, void. The teaching is that man, forfeiting divine revelations from his perception, was left empty and void of heavenly understanding. Likewise, the "foolish heart" is the heart which, failing to revere Christ, its only Light, is consequently left to moral darkness. Man, therefore, first fell into the negative spiritual state, without Christ in imagination or affection; he became spiritually naked and poverty-stricken.

(2). "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (v. 22).

Unillumined reason is now man's only recourse. Here is the birth of philosophy, of boasted and boastful philosophy,—Grecian philosophy, forsooth. Philosophy ignores and contemns supernatural revelation, and professes to be able to fathom the mysteries of existence and of truth unaided. Throughout its history, certain few questions—all answered on the first pages of the Bible—have kept the philosophers speculating, theorizing, discussing and controverting; and yet they have not found the beginning of the answer to one of these questions. Still, for twenty-five centuries, conceited man has given philosophy and its history first rank in the intellectual

world, and even Christian schools of today require great attention to be given to these speculations and to the history of them as a necessary contribution to mental development. The verse before us makes philosophers and fools synonymous. "Fools" here is not a mere negative description, it is a term for positive denial of Christ; "The fool hath saith in his heart, There is no God." Philosophy is atheism; and it is no wonder that Christendom's ardent study of historic philosophical speculations genders rationalism and infidelity. We may affect the expression "Christian Philosophy"; but this is really a misnomer, as the Christian's knowledge is positive, not speculative; it is certain, being of divine revelation; and it belongs to suckling as well as to sage.

(3). "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image of corruptible man" (v. 23); i. e., into an idol. Philosophy has just been called atheism. But it is worse even; it is the mother of idolatry; and of polytheism. Notice that Christ is "the glory of the uncorruptible God"; and the point is here reached in the down-grade of mankind where Christ is supplanted by an idol. This at once discloses the secret of the extreme abhorrence in which all Scripture holds idolatry, and the secret of the extreme insistence of Christ in warning Israel against the same. It also shows that He was eminently justified in ordering the extinction of idolatrous Canaanites before Israel, and in commanding such drastic punishment of any Israelite who tampered with idolatry. It justifies Him in visiting such relentless punishment upon Israel in her time of idolatrous apostasy. Verse 23 also exposes the fathomless depravity and limitless polytheism of heathen idolatry, which not only supplanted Christ with an image of "corruptible man," but with that of birds, then of quadrupeds, and finally with that of reptiles.

Thus irreverent and ungrateful man, too conceited in himself to keep Christ as his "Light of life," and ever

sinking deeper and deeper into idolatrous imagery, "changed the truth [Christ] of God into a lie [an Anti-Christ], and worshipped and served the creature more [rather] than the Creator [Christ], who is blessed for ever. Amen" (v. 25).

Man's moral need of Christ is most impressively disclosed by the description in the following verses of the floodtides of immorality let loose in ever deepening currents as the direct results and characteristics of idolatry. Divine restraints are weakened more and more: "God.....gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts" (v. 24); "God gave them up unto vile affections" (v. 26); "God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (v. 28). Yet they never lose the testimony of their consciences to a judgment to come; but they defy that judgment, enthusiastically pursuing iniquity and chumming with all who do likewise.

And what can be said in adequate reprobation of the theory,—so nearly universal in Christendom—that the heathen world is virtually blameless for its degraded spiritual and moral condition, inasmuch as it is simply a case of standing upon a lower level of evolution and of having in itself the essential germs of saving religion for later development? Ah, no! It is of God's pure mercy in Christ, that the world has not been visited with another exterminating flood for incorrigible resistance to the original and the persistent Light. Idolatry is devil-worship, and it spells perdition; and we, who have the original Gospel, and in its newest edition in Jesus of Nazareth, are under imperative obligation to carry it to every creature, in order that he may perchance be "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."

BOOK SECOND

**Pre-Revelation New Testament
Prophecy**

PART V

Hebrew Prophecy—III. The Gospels

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Introduction to Book Second

THE author of this work is already widely known as a helpful Bible teacher through his volume on the Book of Daniel. Mr. Stevens has consistently employed, over a period of many years, a method of Bible study and teaching which has proven unusually fruitful as tested by wide experience. He has been a man of one book, devoting himself to the Word of God and seeking to interpret Scripture with Scripture. His volume on the Book of Daniel has had extended circulation and has been highly commended by eminent Bible teachers. The author has been preëminently an instructor in the Book of books throughout his long and much-honored ministry. As pastor, he built up his flock in the knowledge of the Word. As Dean of the Missionary Training Institute, Nyack, N. Y., he sent forth successive classes of students who unite in expressing their appreciation of a master-teacher who, through making the Word of God an open Book, stimulated their minds and enriched their spiritual lives. It is a pleasure to the writer hereby to acknowledge his personal debt of gratitude to Mr. Stevens for guidance received in the classroom in distant student-days and also for the later helpfulness that has come through the teaching of his pen. This book, which follows the golden thread of prophecy through the New Testament, will prove a rich storehouse of blessing to every thoughtful reader. The spaciousness of the author's thought, his strong grasp upon the unity of the Word, his reverent scholarship and his unique gift of expression, combine to produce a volume of rare excellence. The entire series covers the element of prophecy throughout the Bible, and hence really deals with the whole Word of God. In the truest sense all the books of the Bible are prophetic. We heartily

commend this great work to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and who desire to obey the command of the Spirit, "Study to show thyself approved unto God."

W. M. TURNBULL.

CHAPTER I.

CONTINUANCE OF HEBREW OUTLOOK.

INTRODUCTORY.

AS HAS already been intimated, prophecy in the Gospels is still essentially Hebrew prophecy; it may be viewed as an appendix given by Jesus Christ Himself to the Hebrew prophecies of the Old Testament. After four hundred years of prophetic silence, God now speaks again predictively by His own Son. However, the outlook presented is not at all different from that left upon our vision by the last prophet of the Old Testament,—it is the Jewish political outlook, that of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel under the visible kingship of the incarnate Son of God.

THE GOSPEL PROPHEPIC OUTLOOK.

Nowhere do the Gospels shift the standpoint of prediction from Israel to the Church, but the outlook remains the already long familiar one of Christ's visible and glorious appearing on the earth as King of the Jews.

When Jesus made His first great self-revelation to Nathanael,—who exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel"—He took occasion to point Nathanael forward to a greater revelation of Himself, saying, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1:49-51), referring, of course, to the glorious visible appearing of Jesus Christ from the sky to the earth.

It was quite late in the earthly ministry of Jesus, that Peter voiced—for himself and probably for the Twelve also—the full acknowledgment of the person of Jesus to

which the Holy Spirit had brought him, in the words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This gave Jesus liberty to talk freely with the Twelve about His approaching sufferings and resurrection. As Peter protested officiously against this, Jesus took occasion to point beyond His impending crucifixion to His after-coming in glory, and to teach that only by sharing His cross could His follower share His crown. A few days later Jesus gave to the chosen three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration the visible illustration of His appearing the second time in glory to earthly view, as "the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

It was still later, indeed but a few days before His crucifixion, that Jesus gave any definite predictions to the Jewish public. While these predictions were given in the hearing of the people, yet they were addressed more especially against the rulers of the Jews. He forewarned them thus in Matt. 21:43: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof." More extendedly and explicitly did He apprise them of the coming doom of Jerusalem and the temple, and of the succeeding desolation for an indefinite time until He should return to receive welcome where now He was being repudiated. See Mat. 23:34-39. Immediately thereupon occasion arose for Jesus to go into these same prospects more at large in a private discourse before His disciples, which occupies Mat. 24 and 25, Mark 13 and Luke 21. But careful examination, as will later be made, proves that the whole outlook of prediction in these passages is that of Jewish national relations to Jesus as their Messianic King. One further brief, fateful word relative to His coming was uttered by Jesus to the highest rulers of the Jews when they sat in pre-judgment over Him and challenged Him to condemn Himself to death by the hypocritical demand, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." To His

unqualified affirmative reply Jesus added defiant challenge to His false judges, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26: 63, 64).

Thus it can be seen clearly that Jesus nowhere in the Gospels develops to view a different predictive outlook from that on which all Hebrew prophecy is focussed; namely, the final appearing of the Messiah of Israel to reign over them on the earth. Even up to the very hour of His ascension this was the only vision known to the Apostles; for they asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" In reply to this question He does not turn their attention to any other ultimate outlook: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." And even after He had disappeared from their sight in a cloud of glory, the angelic monitors, in pointing them to His return, did so only in the well-known Hebrew sense of a visible arrival again in the earth: "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in *like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*" (Acts 1: 6-11). It was with a like promise of reward at His coming to that given to Daniel (12: 13) that Jesus left His disciples: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mat. 19: 28).

This limitation of all Gospel prophecy to Hebrew confines is in full accord with what Jesus declared to His Apostles on the night of His betrayal: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16: 13). We may say, then, without reservation or exception, that, prior to Pentecost and the subsequent revelations of the Holy Spirit, even the

Apostles knew nothing of the Church economy in distinction from the Hebrew economy; they, therefore, had yet to receive the further revelations relating to Christ's glorious appearing which center distinctively in the Church.

This furnishes us an imperative principle in reading the Gospels, lest we fall into the error of reading into them revelations of later origin and of other application. While the parables of "the kingdom of heaven" span the age of the Church, yet they do not disclose the Church; their view of the end of the age is not the view of Christ's coming to receive or to reward the Church, but that of His coming to "send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:41-43). This is neither the final judgment at the great white throne, nor the judgment of the Church before the bema of her Lord in the skies, but it is the separating work to be done in the earth in those last days which are made so familiar to us by Hebrew prophecy.

THE NEW STANDPOINT—"FULFILLED."

While the Gospels still hold our attention to the same familiar Hebrew outlook, yet this outlook is strikingly new in that it is presented by Christ incarnate and from the standpoint of His first advent as an accomplished fulfillment of prophecy thus far. The Gospels open and all through teem with new voices, new themes and new facts. One of their most prominent notes vibrates in the thrilling word "fulfilled." While some few predictions of the ages before had found fulfillment,—like that of the Jewish captivities, the fall of Nineveh, the fall of Babylon, and the restoration of the Jews from Babylonian captivity—and while already a considerable

portion of the prophetic panorama unfolded by the omniscient Christ through Daniel had been written in exact replica into world-history, yet nothing of that great Messianic hope, crowning the whole body of Old Testament prediction from Paradise Lost through antediluvian and postdiluvian ages, had yet begun to be fulfilled. But now, the Gospel-pages are studded with the oft-repeated and thrilling word "fulfilled." **THE MESSIAH HAS COME.** More than thirty times the evangelists literally record fulfillment of Old Testament promise of the Coming One, while every page pulsates with the consciousness of long-awaited fulfillment in His visible presence.

Matthew instantly heralds "the *generation* of Jesus Christ, the son of David,"—promised to him one thousand years before—"the son of Abraham,"—promised to him two thousand years before—the "*Emmanuel*," promised through Isaiah seven centuries before. The first page of Matthew further sparkles with incidents of Messiah's nativity: "Now *the birth* of Jesus Christ was on this wise." "Till she had *brought forth* her firstborn Son; and he [Joseph] called his name Jesus." "Now when Jesus *was born* in Bethlehem of Judea."

Mark makes "the beginning" of his glad tidings of the visible arrival of the promised Son of God His introduction by John the Baptist fulfilling the office—predicted on the last page of Old Testament Scripture—as herald of the One who should baptize with the Holy Ghost. And Jesus Himself, promptly stepping forth in public, first opens His mouth with the new and stirring message, "*The time is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God is at hand."

Luke presents this notable arrival as the fulfillment of the promise, dating from Paradise Lost, that a descendant of the first and fallen pair should appear to crush the head of their tempter, that old serpent, Satan.

And John—than whom none ever sank deeper into

the heart of Christ, in that loving trust to which that heart is ever open, no matter who it is that offers it—discloses the secret, that the appearing of Jesus Christ was fulfillment of prophecy antedating all written prophecy,—the original and true *Protevangelium*—a prophecy as old as eternity, the prophecy that is articulate in the eternal nature itself of the Son of God: as Word-God, He must needs go all the way in revealing God to man; and to reveal God fully to man He must needs reveal God in Himself as man, He must needs manifest all His divine and eternal offices in man's behalf in human expression. "THE WORD BECAME FLESH." It is not a new or different person, in new or different offices; but all that the Word-God is shown by John to have been and done in invisible pre-incarnate existence He came to be likewise in incarnate existence and activity.

This new point of view which had been reached—that from the physical manifestation of Him who is the Pole-star of all prophetic perspective—is most strikingly indicated by the effect produced among men by the arrival of the Son of God in human revelation.

Even before Jesus' actual birth there was a lively stir of unparalleled anticipation among certain groups. The good priest Zacharias was astonished, while offering incense in the temple, at the appearing of the Lord's great angel Gabriel, who announced to him that his wife Elizabeth in her hopeless barrenness should in due time give birth to that herald of the incarnate Messiah which had been predicted by Isaiah and Malachi. Six months later the same angelic messenger visited Mary and announced to her the impending conception of the Son of the Highest, who should be given the throne of David and who should reign forever over the house of Jacob. Shortly thereafter, when Mary visited her aged cousin Elizabeth, no sooner had she offered her salutation than the unborn John leaped for joy in Elizabeth's womb;

then the latter was filled with the Holy Ghost and reverently saluted the young maiden as "the mother of my Lord." Mary straightway burst forth with that thrilling "Magnificat" in acknowledgment of God's fulfillment now at hand of all the promises to the fathers clear back to Abraham.

And when John was born, suddenly the tongue of Zacharias the father was loosed and he uttered by the Holy Ghost that matchless "Benedictus," beginning thus: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been *since the world began*" (Luke 1: 68-70).

Since the fall of man the supreme hour was the night of Christ's nativity, when the angelic world—which had long desired to see fulfilled the things which they also well knew that the prophets of old were by the Spirit of Christ in them signifying—was all aflutter over the Judean village of Bethlehem. Their leader, espying shepherds upon the hillside keeping faithful watch over their flocks, could not refrain from affrighting them by appearing to them in a flood of dazzling glory-light, in order to share with them the "good tidings of great joy" for them and "to all people," that "unto you is born this day in the city of David a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST THE LORD." And suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host joined their leader in "praising God": "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Those humble shepherds hastened away into the city of David and found, as directed by the angel, the lowly spot where lay the infant Christ. At once they were turned into evangelists and spread wonderment throughout the land as they convincingly reported what they had heard and seen.

After forty days (Lev. 12:2-4) Joseph and Mary brought Jesus for formal, though humble, presentation unto God in the temple. There was a group of saints gathered in holy, discerning exultation over this unique child that had come by promise into the world. The aged Simeon—a holy and devout man, divinely sensing through the Holy Spirit that was upon him that “the Consolation of Israel,” for Whom he and others like him were waiting in lively expectation, was about to appear, even in his closing lifetime—came by the Spirit’s drawing into the temple at the opportune moment. Tenderly and reverently he took this child up in his loving arms and blessed God, saying, “Mine eyes have seen **THY SALVATION**, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

At the same instant a blessed mother in Israel, past one hundred years old,—Anna, a prophetess, keen as Moses in the Spirit, constantly frequenting the temple, engaged with fastings by night in prayer and by day in holy converse and in teaching amidst the kingdom-watchers of those momentous days—came into the midst of the group about Jesus and joined in thanks unto the Lord, speaking to the assemblage of this child as the fulfillment of the redemption they had all been looking for in Jerusalem.

Another group appeared to adore the infant Jesus, that of the wise men from the east; wise, not as astrologers, but as representatives of those who originally caught divine communications through the celestial luminaries which were created to be used first of all for “signs.” After months of journeying they arrived, led by a significant star and guided by the more sure light of prophecy, and worshipped in this child Him that was “*born King of the Jews.*”

But not only these classes, whose vigils and dreams and secret revelations concerning the appearing of the

Messiah were thus so joyously satisfied, indicate to us what a new and momentous stage in the prophetic perspective had been reached. As the wise men made known their inquiry for the spot of the Saviour's birth as King of the Jews, all the outside Jerusalem—political, ecclesiastical and social—was thrown into a ferment of anxiety. Herod trembled on his throne. Chief priests and scribes feverishly turned to the "more sure word of prophecy" with a directness and definiteness unknown for generations; and they soon found it written plainly in Micah, some seven centuries before, that literally in near-by Bethlehem just such an event as the wise men were believing had transpired was to occur. All Jerusalem was stunned at the possibility that the Messiah, for whom *they had not* been looking and for whose presence in sight *they were not* prepared, had come into the world. Herod was so affected by what the fulfillment of this prophecy meant that he, in dastardly hypocrisy, marked the spot, not as the shrine of his worship, but as the shambles of his diabolical murder of the innocents.

CHAPTER II.

THE GENEALOGIES OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE literature upon this subject is very voluminous and not a little uncertain and perplexing in conclusions. We are, therefore, left exactly at our true starting-point; namely, at a quite independent and first-hand reliance upon the simple records of the Gospel writers themselves; that is, upon Matthew and Luke directly and alone. These records deserve a special treatment in the progress of our present prophetic study of the Bible, and this seems to be a logical place for such a chapter.

MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY OF JESUS, CHAPTER 1.

Matthew manifestly intends to show Jesus Christ to be the lawful heir to the Messianic covenants of God with David and Abraham. He is legal successor to the throne of David, also to the Abrahamic inheritance as that "Seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). And He is introduced by Matthew as such by virtue of being born to Joseph by Mary (1:16), for Matthew's genealogy is clearly that of Joseph.

But, as Matthew proceeds to show, Jesus was not by physical nativity the son of Joseph. On the supposition that Mary's yet unborn child was of natural origin, Joseph, although being the espoused husband of Mary, yet as an upright man was purposed "to put her away," not, however, as "a public example," but "privily." This plan was intercepted by God through an angel by a dream, in which Joseph was informed convincingly that the unborn child was of supernatural origin and was indeed the long-promised incarnation of God Himself, in which dream Joseph was also directed fearlessly,

and in faithfulness to Mary and the child, to face the world as the lawful husband of a pure wife and the lawful father of a legitimate child. This act secured the honor of Mary, who nevertheless has had the shame attributed persistently to her of bearing an illegitimate child.

Joseph's act legalized not only the birth of Jesus, but also His succession to the throne of David and to the Abrahamic inheritance. This succession is by Matthew plainly shown to have been effected in full legality through Joseph by virtue of his publicly taking Mary, as physical mother of Jesus, as his wife before Jesus was born. This was sound and incontestable law. But notice, that the unimpeachable title of Jesus as the designed Restorer of the fallen house of David hinged upon the fact of the virgin birth and incarnate origin of Jesus Christ. To question this fact is both to flout the integrity of Matthew's record and to impeach the legitimacy of Jesus' title to the Davidic throne and to the Abrahamic inheritance.

Before leaving Matthew, it may be remarked that we need not in this treatment of the subject to discuss certain puzzling details involved in the make-up of his genealogy, such as the omission of some generations from the list, the unaccustomed inclusion of two female names, and the evident artificial construction of the tripartite list on the principle of fourteen generations to each member of the triplet. The Jews were fond of cunning and symmetrical forms, and they considered such means to that end as perfectly legitimate. The evident object of Matthew was to throw strikingly before his readers the notable outline of the history of the house of David in its three periods of preparation, prevalence and perdition, the Saviour of which ruined house now comes forth as long before promised to David the original head.

LUKE'S GENEALOGY, 3:23-38.

This genealogy stands in salient features entirely apart from Matthew's. To a great length and in vivid picturesqueness the story, not merely the fact of Jesus' virgin birth, divine incarnation and royal destiny, have already been portrayed by the expert historian Luke. Not in association therewith is Jesus' genealogy introduced by Luke, but as the immediate preface to our Lord's public ministry.

After reaching the most impressive point where, according to 3:22, God the Father by the Dove and the voice from heaven publicly acknowledged Jesus as His "Beloved Son," Luke proceeds to tell who Jesus was by physical descent. That, of course, implied a line of male ancestors through His mother Mary.

Now, Luke carries our Lord's descent backward instead of forward as does Matthew. There is in Luke's exhibit nothing artificial in form, conducing to make Jewish historical and national features noticeable. Indeed, great care is shown to include accurately every human generation in the chain of Jesus' ancestry clear back to God through the first created man. Some names are thus included which are otherwise lost to us, notably the name of Cainan in verse 36. And, while the line runs through David and Abraham, yet those names are not exalted above any others.

Jesus, therefore, is by Luke introduced racially, not nationally, the Son of God in the Son of man, the "last Adam," "the Everlasting Father." Clearly then—it seems to the author—this is Jesus' natural line, though not of legal and royal descent. Notice, that the line does not run through David by Solomon, and by the line of succeeding kings of Judah, but by Solomon's brother Nathan. This is, then, the line of Jesus' ancestry by human origin and physical birth through Mary.

Here lies the solution of Luke's peculiar reference to

Joseph before introducing the line of Jesus' natural male ancestry, and truly that peculiar reference is very helpful. While Joseph is mentioned as the "supposed" father of Jesus, as if he were first in the line backward of Jesus' male ancestry, yet Luke finds in Heli—who, of course, must have been the father of Mary and the grandfather of Jesus according to the flesh—the first male ancestor of Jesus reckoning backward. This is made all the clearer if we exercise our perfect liberty to parenthesize verse 23 thus: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, (being as was supposed the son of Joseph) which was the son of Heli"; that is, "which [Jesus, not Joseph] was the son of Heli." It is interesting to note that the Jewish Talmud refers to Mary as the daughter of Heli. This would make Jesus Heli's grandson; and it is not at all uncommon in Jewish genealogy to call one a son although skipping one or more generations.

Luke's genealogy then also, besides his direct narrative concerning the nativity, stands as a bold and irrefragable bulwark to the supernatural origin and incarnate generation of Jesus Christ, and it identifies this real child of mankind as the eternal Christ, the Saviour of the world.

CHAPTER III.

THE VEILED PROPHET.

ONE of the outstanding signs of the Messiah was to be His coming as a prophet like unto Moses.

Not alone was it common for Jesus to be called a prophet, even "a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke 24:19), but He was often designated as that particular, unique, Messianic Prophet, that One whom God promised to raise up like unto Moses. Especially in the Gospel of John is Jesus so identified. On one occasion, after beholding the miracles of Jesus, the people exclaimed, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (6:14). Again, "Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet" (7:40). In Acts 3:22 Peter identifies Jesus with this same particular Prophet.

We are not left to conjecture as to wherein this likeness was to consist. The passage itself, Deut. 18:15-19, explains it. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee [Israel] a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me [Moses]; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou [Israel] desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me [Israel] not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me [Moses], They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet [hereafter] from among their brethren, like unto thee [Moses], and I will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words

which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

Moses, in his fearless, adoring entrance into face-to-face audience with Jehovah in the thick cloud upon Sinai's summit, represented a true spiritual Israel; but the common carnal Israel shrank in fear even from Jehovah's voice out of the thick cloud; so they begged Moses to become Jehovah's spokesman unto them. They were terrified even by the transitory halo of glory shining from Moses' face when he returned from the glory-presence of Christ with His words to them, and they begged Moses to veil his face as long as the glory lingered there. Hence all Jehovah's communications had to be given by Moses as a medium,—opaque, common in appearance like other Israelites. Only thus could Christ keep Israel within ear-shot.

So this promised Messianic Prophet was to appear out of glory, but without "the form of God"; with no glory apparent to common sight; He was to appear as an ordinary man, "from the midst of thee, of thy brethren." He was to appear, not with His own inherent authority, but as a spokesman for God. When Jesus was born as "Son of the Highest," there was no halo of glory emitting from His infant face. Those Spirit-taught groups perceived the Messiah by other signs; even they might have been affrighted had He shone with dazzling divine glory. It was with "no form nor comeliness," but as "a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground," that God's holy child Jesus was to "grow up before Him."

True, for twelve years this "child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." At this significant age He indeed astonished the divines in the temple with "His understanding and answers"; and He gave His mother food for deepest reflection by the peculiar way in which He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about MY FATHER'S

from the East, and others of that day, even the "doctors" in the temple of twelve years after,—all who had perceived, either on sight or on hearing, in the infant Jesus, perhaps also in the twelve-year old boy, the promised Messiah—had doubtless all passed away from earth. Meanwhile Jesus had been growing up, living and laboring in a remote and obscure city where most probably His identify was a secret outside the breasts of Joseph and Mary. And Joseph had now probably died. Consequently, the Messianic secret connected with this quiet and plain carpenter of Nazareth had come to survive, most probably, in the breasts of but two persons, Mary, and John, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth. And this John "knew Him not"; yet he stood true to the calling unto which he was sanctified in the womb. As he was sent forth by the Spirit of God to preach in the wilderness and to baptize in the Jordan, John was secretly given a sign by which he should identify the Son of God come in the flesh. So, when, having baptized Jesus as a stranger, "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased," John "saw, and bare record that *this is the Son of God.*"

So striking was John in person and ministry that Jewry was excited with the question whether he were not himself the Christ. When visited by a formal and imposing delegation of priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to whose inquiry, "Who art thou?" he testified that he was but the humble herald of the Christ, he had opportunity the next day to point them visibly to Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." These Pharisees gave no evidence of accepting Jesus as such, however. Their report in Jerusalem must have played an important part in preparing conditions in religious quarters to be met there by Jesus very soon after.

But John's testimony in the same language on the next day to two of his disciples, Andrew and probably John, led them to follow after Jesus and to accept His courteous invitation to a private interview at His lodgings late that afternoon. They came away with the message for others, "We have found the Messiah." Simon, the son of Jonas, was the first to act upon this message, and he came away from first contact with Jesus with his apostolical name Cephas. Then Philip was found by Jesus, and Philip somehow found in Jesus the Christ just through the two words from Jesus' lips, "Follow me." Then Nathanael caught the revelation of the Christ in Jesus through a few words showing His divine acquaintance with Nathanael, and he confessed with astonishment and adoration, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." On the sixth of these wondrous days of revelation, Jesus brought these five disciples, now detached from John the Baptist, with Him to the marriage at Cana, where He turned the water into wine; and it is recorded by John the Apostle: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and *manifested forth his glory*; and His disciples believed in Him" (2:11).

Thus, in these first two chapters of John, we have richly illustrated the significant means by which Jesus revealed His identity in a way not to terrify one, and yet in a way to create faith in Him as Christ in open hearts and to strengthen that faith. The whole Book of John is especially occupied with Jesus' work of revealing Himself as Christ and Saviour to believing hearts and in ministering to them in divine things. It is most interesting to follow in this book the progress in faith on the part of believing ones, the defection of faith on the part of shallow professors, and the hardening of heart on the part of wilfully disbelieving ones. The results as recorded are that, on the side of believers, Thomas, the most skeptical of the Twelve, after supreme testing of

their faith, voiced the highest expression of conviction in the words, "My Lord and my God"; while, on the side of hard-hearted disbelievers,—the rulers of the Jews in the lead—they not only "believed not on him," "though he had done so many miracles before them," but they came into the reprobate condition where "they could not believe"; while also the fickle minded were ready one day to acclaim Him as Israel's Messianic King and the next day to howl, "Crucify him, crucify him."

Most vital it was, too, that every one should "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"; for, as Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "If ye believe not that I [Jesus of Nazareth] am he [the eternal Christ and Son of God] ye shall die in your sins" (John 8: 24). Most vital, too, is it now, that through the Gospel records every one should put faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, come in the flesh as Son of God our only Saviour. John expressly declares this to be the reason for writing his Gospel. After Thomas had given that crowning confession of faith, Jesus "saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (20: 29). But can non-witnesses as surely obtain the convincing and saving revelation as eye-witnesses? The Apostle John explains this in the two following verses: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye [the readers] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

AVOIDANCE OF A SERIOUS ERROR.

While thus emphasizing the vital importance of all men's perceiving and believing in that day that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, was the Son of God come in the flesh, was the King of the Jews so long promised to appear of the house of David, yet a somewhat natural

and quite common mistake is to be avoided. John the Baptist's preaching was punctuated with the proclamation, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 3:2). Jesus Himself opened His public ministry with the thrilling challenge: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). It may seem that it was a natural inference for the Jews to draw, that this meant to announce that the Messiah was at hand to take the throne of David over restored Israel. It may be thought and taught that both John and Jesus meant it to be so understood. The question is often raised, "What would have been the course of things had the Jews received and crowned Jesus as their King?" In accord with this view it would follow that at some point "the great divide" was crossed, after which the restoration of the kingdom of Israel with Jesus as King was deferred beyond the cross, the resurrection, the ascension of Jesus into glory and the present protracted dispensation, until Christ Jesus shall return from glory to be welcomed to the throne of David by Israel.

Considerable color for this course of thought seems to be lent not only by such announcements as have been cited, but also by language of the Lord uttered out of deep regret at the close of His ministry. The language referred to occurs in Luke's account of our Lord's "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem on Palm Sabbath. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou *knewest not the time of thy visitation*" (Luke 19:41-

44). These words certainly show that had the Jews taken a right course toward Jesus the awful calamity of 70 A. D. would never have occurred. But that the immediate erection of the kingdom of Israel was not depending upon Jesus' reception as their King at this time is clear from the earlier part of the same chapter in Luke. In verses 11, 12 we read: "And as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they *thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*. He said therefore, A certain nobleman *went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.*" Under this parabolic language Jesus took pains, while not changing the idea of the populace at all about the literal visible restoration of the kingdom of Israel by the Messiah, yet to correct the idea of its being introduced by Him in His first advent. It shows that at present He was, so to speak, but the candidate for the kingdom, wishing, indeed, the approval of the nation to His candidacy, but recognizing that it was from heaven's hands, and not from earth's first, that He must "receive the kingdom."

And at no time earlier did Jesus give any more countenance to the thought or purpose to make Him king at that time. In another instance we read: "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (John 6:15). It is no doubt true that Jesus' true followers generally held, even persistently, to the idea that He was there to take the throne. This was probably the idea in the mind of Zebedee's wife when she presented to Jesus that request in behalf of James and John: "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom" (Mat. 22:21). But again, when the two disciples walking to Emmaus that day of the resurrection lamented, "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," Jesus

said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24: 21, 25).

From this last quotation we learn why the error prevailed that Jesus was present to take the throne; it was because the eyes of even Christ's followers were blind to the plain language of the Old Testament prophecies. So Jesus went right on to say to these two: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (that is, before redeeming Israel to her lost kingdom). The narrative continues: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (vs. 26, 27). That same evening Jesus met with ten of the disciples and took physical pains to convince them that He was actually risen from the dead. "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me" (v. 44). Yes, "*all things.*" "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ *to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*" (vs. 45-47). That is, He showed the disciples out of the Old Testament Scriptures that all this program must first be carried out before He could restore the kingdom to Israel. It follows, that our eyes are culpably blinded in like manner to the full and explicit teachings of the Old Testament, if we fail to see that Jesus not only had no authority to announce, but that He could not give the slightest countenance to the idea of His then taking the throne. Had He done so in the least degree, He would have denied the prophets, He would have made void the Scriptures.

A further conclusive evidence that Jesus first came

without magisterial character is found in His entire submission to existing rule. He was subject not only to the law of Moses but also to the civil administration; and He made no assumption or effort to pass comment upon the same or to alter its operations, however unjust they might be. To the man who asked Him to speak to his brother about dividing the inheritance between them, Jesus replied, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" "Doth not your master pay tribute?" one asked of Peter. "Yes," was Peter's reply. "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," was to Jesus then as binding an obligation as the other, "and unto God the things that are God's." John the Baptist even seems to have had his faith in Jesus as the Messiah shaken temporarily, when Jesus did not even take up in protest the injustice of John's imprisonment. Jesus' answer to John's question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" was in effect that His deeds of mercy and truth were all that according to the Scriptures belonged to Him to do as yet in the flesh. (See Matt. 11:2-6.) When Pilate asserted the power of life and death over Jesus, Jesus did not dispute it, and He did not resort to the angelic rescue which He could have obtained by prayer to His Father.

It is conclusive that Jesus gave not one scintilla of ground to ascribe magisterial functions to Him then; neither has He assumed such yet or authorized His Church or followers to do so in His name. It is entirely mistaken and misleading to look to the teachings and example of Jesus or of the Apostles for a new and better scheme of present world-order, social or political. When the Church begins to steer in that direction, she ceases to look for Jesus to come again, ceases to consider it necessary for Him to come again in a new, a political, character. Nevertheless, Jesus just as plainly and consistently upheld the prophetic expectation of the literal kingdom. He never in the least beclouded this expecta-

tion in those days, neither did He divert attention from the strictly literal and Hebrew aspect of His coming again. To those who "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," He gave no disappointment excepting as to the question of time. To the two disciples, who lamented with bewildered hearts, "We trusted that it had been he which should have delivered Israel," He only explained from Old Testament Scriptures that His sufferings and glorification must precede His fulfilling that hope. To the Apostles, who even after His resurrection were still standing on purely Hebrew ground of outlook—when, in their last words to Him before His ascension, they asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel"—Jesus replied in a way neither to dampen their hope of that restoration nor to divert their vision to another aspect of His coming.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS' GREAT OLIVET PROPHECY, I.

INTRODUCTORY.

AS HAS been noted, it was not until very late in His ministry—not until He was rejected as Messianic King by the Jewish authorities—that Jesus opened His mouth at all largely in direct prediction, and then only relative to the Hebrew nation as connected with His return. His great prophecies are left to us in Matt. 21-25, Mark 11-13 and Luke 19-21. Of course, these are not three different bodies of prophecy, but only the three synoptic accounts of one and the same body of prophecy. The differences are such, however, as to require attention to all three.

OCCASION FOR NEW PROPHECY.

This body of prediction from the lips of Jesus was occasioned, as has been intimated, by the refusal Jesus met with from the Jewish rulers when He for the first and only time presented Himself in Jerusalem, the nation's capital, as "Messiah, the Prince" (Dan. 9:25), with the signs identifying Him as such which were required by Zech. 9:9. All four evangelists record this significant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. (Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-15.) While the jubilant populace acclaimed Jesus in unmistakable language as the Messianic King,—“Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord” (John 12:13)—yet the rulers treated Him with ominous silence, or with actual rebuke.

The next day (Sunday), on His way in from Bethany to Jerusalem again, Jesus cursed the barren fig tree,

using it as a type of the deceitful, fruitless Jewish nation. Then He reclaimed the temple from the thieving traders as God's "house of prayer for all nations"; whereupon the ecclesiastics "sought how they might destroy him" (Mark 11:18).

It seems most satisfactory to place right here Luke 19:41-44, as a sad soliloquy rather than even as a direct private communication to the disciples. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and shall compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation."

The next day (Monday), as Jesus returned again to the city, the disciples were astonished to find the fig tree "withered away." It of course mutely betokened the inconceivably speedy ruin of the Jewish nation. When Jesus replied to their astonishment, that even so might "this mountain" be removed by the word of faith in God, He was very likely using a familiar Old Testament figure for an earthly empire; very likely He was darkly intimating that the mighty dominion of Rome even should pass into oblivion before the power of Christian faith.

On that same day Jesus met all the hostile ruling classes in repeated final, decisive clash, putting them all to silence and driving them mad with murderous hate and rage, as He laid bare their hearts and their practices of hypocrisy and iniquity before the multitudes that thronged Jerusalem on the eve of the Passover. Among other passages Jesus used two parables suited to the occasion, which anticipated the impending change of

dispensations. The application of the parable of the wicked husbandman (Matt. 21:33-44) was made in the significant words: "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22:1-10) intimated the judgment to befall Jerusalem in the words: "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." And Jesus even intimated the succeeding evangelization of the Gentiles in the words: "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests." (This, of course, does not amount to any revelation of the Church, or of Christ's coming in relation to the Church.)

Christ's denunciations of the rulers were followed immediately by His sorrowful malediction upon temple, city and people (Matt. 23:34-39). It reads: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say

unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Note, that in these words Jesus, after outlining the intensive evangelization following Pentecost and the fierce persecution of His messengers, pronounced the impending infliction of long-outstanding judgment upon that generation of the Jews; and that He vividly punctuates this deliverance by the authoritative consignment of the temple to an indefinitely protracted desolation; and that this period will terminate in Christ's return to be welcomed where He was then refused. This closes the public discourses of Jesus and His active relations to populace and rulers. While the passage just quoted furnishes the basis for the great extended prophetic contribution of the Gospels about to be reviewed, yet, properly speaking, Jesus gave no special additional prophecy to the Jewish people, but only in private to His disciples. The only exception to this remark is the word extracted from Jesus by His false judges two days later, to whom He declared, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64).

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as He sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" (Mark 13:1-4).

This is all clear. The scene just left behind in the temple must have been most dramatic. Upon quitting the temple with Jesus and ascending to the summit of Mount Olivet just opposite, the disciples were evidently impressed as never before with the grandeur and apparent stability of the sacred structures; and they

seemed inclined to question the literal meaning if not the credibility of Jesus' words still resounding in their ears. In response to their questioning Jesus even more graphically describes the demolition of those edifices which should come. So, having now seated themselves overlooking Mount Zion, four of the disciples asked Jesus privately, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall come to pass?"

Jesus had given a most definite prediction; an equally definite question was put to Him as to the time and sign of fulfillment of the same. We should expect an equally definite and plain answer to the question. Moreover, Matthew records a further equally definite question, one which relates to Christ's return, of which Jesus had as definitely apprised the rulers and the populace as He had done of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. This further question was, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [age]?"

We are, then, to expect to find answers to these two momentous matters,—answers definite, in the order of the questions, and with clear transition from the one main subject, that of the destruction of Jerusalem, to the other, that of the coming again of Jesus Christ at the end of the age. And if we credit Jesus with what we would expect and exact from any ordinary person of intelligence, we should have no difficulty in keeping under clear light in following the long prophetic discourse of the Master which follows. We will first quote Matthew's record of Christ's answers to the two questions, as given in Matt. 24:4-30, only throwing the transitions of His teaching more strikingly before the reader's eye than the usual text does.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLIVET PROPHECY, II. FALL OF JERUSALEM 70 A. D., AND THE SUCCEEDING INTERIM.

MATTHEW'S REPORT, MATT. 24: 4-30.

“4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but THE END is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these things are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto THE END, the same shall be saved.

14 AND THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD FOR A WITNESS UNTO ALL NATIONS;

and then shall THE END come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the Holy Place, [Whoso readeth, let him understand:] 16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them which give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if

any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRIBULATION OF THOSE DAYS shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven in power and great glory."

EXAMINATION OF THIS PASSAGE.

A careful examination of this passage will soon satisfy any one that verses 4-13 constitute the reply of Jesus to the disciples' first question—"When shall these things be?"—that relating to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which occurred in 70 A. D.; and these verses are to be limited to the portrayal of conditions which were to mark the less than forty years prior to that event. This is "THE END" spoken of in these verses; and *none of these expressions are to be quoted as signs of the present days* or of the last days of any excepting that long-past time.

Discrimination in reading will also readily perceive that from verse 15 on another "END"—the end of the age at Christ's return—is treated. This is made certain by the fact that the tribulation introduced with this verse is declared in verse 21 to be that supreme tribulation of the Jews, which Old Testament prophecy has constantly pointed to as belonging to the last days of Israel's restoration.

Consequently, verse 14 is a connecting link between the one "end"—that of 70 A. D.—and the other "end"—

that which is to close this age and witness the return of Jesus Christ in power and glory. The words, "and then shall the end come," *do not belong to v. 14 but should introduce verse 15 and the new subject.* Without these words, then, verse 14 is to be read as covering the *indeterminate interval* lying between two critical epochs—one "end" and another "end"—in Jewish history, which interval was to be *unbrokenly occupied* with just one thing of interest to the Master and to His follower,—the preaching of "this gospel of the kingdom . . . in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Obviously this is not so much a prediction as a direction of the Master to govern the program of His servants for the time of Jerusalem's desolation. This direction calls for discriminating consideration.

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Let the meaning and the propriety of this language be carefully noted.

The expression, "gospel of the kingdom," reminds us that, while there is but one Gospel and that for all times, yet there are different aspects of this Gospel. The language here used represents a political and Jewish aspect of the Gospel. The whole address before us is a political one, in that it deals with the problem of the final restoration of the Jewish nation which the Lord had just consigned to a fresh ruin and dispersion. From that standpoint the Gospel is here appropriately denominated "*the gospel of the kingdom,*" because one aspect of the Gospel is the proclamation of the glad tidings of the coming of Jesus Christ as the King of the Jews and of the restoration of their kingdom in the earth. It is as though Jesus had said: "What I am telling you from Israel's standpoint about my return in power and glory as King of the Jews shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations."

Then the expression, "for a witness unto all nations,"

becomes peculiarly significant and appropriate. It means that the political and Jewish aspect of Christ's return is of moment to all Gentile nations and should be made known to them as political bodies, lest they should be ignorant of their political accountability to the coming King of the Jews. Note, that Jesus did not say that this Gospel of the kingdom should be *preached* only to all Gentile governments, but that it should be preached in all the world so as to serve as a *witness* unto all nations as political bodies.

Now this "witness" is just as important for one nation as for another and just as important in one generation of the Christian era as in another. It was to be given "unto all nations" from the one "end" till the other "end," from the "end" in 70 A. D.—when the Jewish nation was to become a vagabond in the earth—until the "end," when the Jewish nation should be reconstituted and come under judgment finally for its impenitency, preparatory to its glorious restoration.

We may now easily avoid serious misconceptions to which this passage seems to be peculiarly liable.

1. It surely does not mean that the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom is to be divorced from that of the Gospel of grace, or that commanded by Jesus in Mark 16:15: "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It is the same Gospel in both cases; it simply appears that the full preaching of the one true Gospel includes the "kingdom aspect," and that this aspect should always be published "in all the world to every creature" and as "a witness unto all nations."

2. It surely does not mean that this preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom in all the world is the *condition of Christ's return*. This misconception might easily be drawn from the way in which the words, "and then shall the end come," are joined to the previous part of verse 14 by a semi-colon, instead of their starting a new

sentence and a new subject as an introduction to verse 15 and what follows. Still farther from Christ's meaning would be the idea that to have preached this Gospel in all the world *just once*,—whether in apostolic times, now or later—would meet all requirement for the Lord's return. In another connection the Master used the words, "Occupy till I come." The direction we are now considering tells His followers how to be occupying the whole time of His absence; namely, by preaching the Gospel in all the world without ever failing to present this kingdom aspect "for a witness unto all nations."

3. Neither can our Lord's meaning be satisfied by a mere voicing of the Gospel within the confines of each and every nation; still less by a final proclamation to be made during the last seven years of the revived Jewish State, as if "the Gospel of the kingdom" did not belong to this "dispensation of grace." Clearly the true meaning of Jesus was that, during the entire indeterminate time of the then impending Jewish dispersion, the Gospel should everywhere be preached,—among all nations, to every creature, and in each succeeding generation till Jesus returns—and that everywhere and all the time the proclamation of Christ's return in its political aspect, as King of the Jews and as sovereign ruler of the earth, was to be kept to the front. How sadly the Church has failed to fill the whole earth unremittingly with this preaching ever since Jerusalem was obliterated as the religious Mecca of the earth! How far we still are from performing this "one thing needful"! How unprepared we are for the Master to return and call us to account for this commission! How evident it is that nothing short of "The Full Gospel" for every creature now living is a worthy watchword for the Church or for any believer today!

MARK'S REPORT.

We will now read the parallel passage from Mark 13:5-26.

“5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: 6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but THE END shall not be yet. 8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. 9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. 10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations. 11 But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. 12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. 13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto THE END, the same shall be saved.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand), then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains: 15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything out of his house: 16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. 17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. 19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. 20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. 21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not: 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. 23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things. 24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, 25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.”

THE PASSAGE EXAMINED.

A careful examination of this passage will show that vs. 5-13 relate to the conditions marking the brief epoch terminating with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., while from verse 14 the final tribulation and conditions prevailing at Christ's return are in view. Verse 10 shows that in that first generation after Pentecost the Gospel was to be published everywhere; and it may excite the question whether Matt. 24:14 is not also to be taken to refer to the time prior to 70 A. D. But several differences are to be noted. In Mark it is "the gospel," not "this gospel of the kingdom." There was not the same urgency for preaching the Gospel in its political aspect before that date, that there has been ever since the Hebrew political economy was swept aside. Mark also reads "must" and "first," showing that a temporary and conditional world-wide evangelization is indicated by Mark, while quite the contrary is the case with Matthew. Finally, that "the end" in Matt. 24:14 is not 70 A. D., but the final end, is shown by the word "therefore" at the beginning of verse 15, by which "the end" there is identified with the time of vs. 15-30. (By the way, this inferential conjunction "therefore" shows that the weight of the preceding thought rests upon the sentence, "and then shall the end come"; so that this sentence should stand independently of the previous part of verse 14 and not as an integral addition. This confirms what has been said already to the effect that the part of verse 14 relating to world-wide preaching of "this gospel of the kingdom" describes what our Master meant to have going forward without intermission throughout the dispensation from 70 A. D. till the last days before His return. We re-iterate therefore, that this task is not presented as the condition of the Lord's return, although it is the only occupation left by the Lord to His Church during His

absence. How zealous and artful is Satan in obscuring, perverting and thwarting our Lord's meaning and intention in this remarkable direction!)

We can see now that we get from our Saviour's great prophetic address a threefold chronology: 1. The period terminating with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. 2. The Gospel-age, from 70 A. D. to "the end," or the epoch connected with Christ's immediate return. 3. The brief period of the "Tribulation" and of the antecedents of His Epiphany. Yet this definite revelation of a Gospel-age does not disclose the Church or present the coming of Christ in any new aspect associated with the Church.

LUKE'S REPORT.

We will now turn to the parallel passage found in Luke 21:8-27.

"8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. 9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. 10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: 11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. 12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. 13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: 15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. 16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends, and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls. 20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that

are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: AND JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED.

25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. 27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

THE PASSAGE EXAMINED.

It should be carefully noticed that in this passage, not only the general conditions, which Christ showed were to mark the period prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., are described (vs. 8-19),—in features very familiar already from Matthew and Mark—but a prophetic picture is also given (vs. 20-24) of the awful scenes attending the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which Matthew and Mark omit entirely. On the other hand, it is to be noted that Luke omits altogether the prophetic account of the final tribulation in Judea, which Matthew and Mark so graphically depict, and he simply includes the tribulation of the last days in the general situation of things ensuing upon Jerusalem's fall in 70 A. D. and described in the words: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." It would, therefore, be entirely improper to apply any details from Luke 21: 8-24 as signs of days subsequent to 70 A. D., as it is to do so with any details of Matt. 24: 4-13 or Mark 13: 5-13.*

*Note that the records show three different ways in which Jesus represented that long interval between the two ends—the end of "these [immediate] things"; namely, at 70 A. D. and the final "end of the

Much confusion has resulted from failing to perceive that Luke's description of tribulation relates to the sufferings of the Jews terminating in their captivity and dispersion, and in the Gentile possession of Jerusalem for these past eighteen and one-half centuries, while Matthew and Mark alone describe the "tribulation" which is yet to befall the apostate Jews in their land immediately prior to our Lord's reappearing. See Luke 21:24 in contrast with Matt. 24:29 and Mark 13:24. Luke had a special reason for introducing the Saviour's prediction of the siege and fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., for Luke adds to the question of the disciples, "When shall these things [relating to the early desolation of Jerusalem] be," the further question, "What sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" This question is answered in verse 20: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Directions are then immediately given as to what the believers should

age"—should be spanned. In Luke 21:24 it is expressed, "and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." In Matt. 23:38 it is expressed, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate"; while in Matt. 24:14 the way in which the interval was to be spanned is expressed. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." How clearly this appears when we read it as the conclusion of vs. 5-13, while the words "and then shall the end come" are read as the introduction of what follows! As though Jesus meant to show that the overthrow of Jerusalem was needful for the immediate and age-long unrestricted proclamation of the glad tidings of the coming kingdom to all the political authorities of the world.

Note also how Jesus expressed in three ways His Gospel commission for this whole dispensation. 1. Here it is "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in *all* the world for a *witness unto all nations*." 2. In Matt. 28:19 it is, "Go ye, therefore, and teach *all nations*." (i. e. "make disciples of all nations"). 3. In Mark 16:15 it is, "Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to every creature." Clearly the commission in full combines in one evangel all three of these features of earth-wide, age-long missions.

And there is a harmfulness in reading Matt. 24:14 as if Jesus meant to promise that, when the Gospel of His second coming should be given as a witness among all nations, He would come, as though by this means we can secure or hasten His return. This is, on the one hand, untrue to Scriptural teaching as to time-setting. On the other hand, it introduces a false incentive to world-wide evangelization, which is not to "bring Jesus back," but to save whosoever will come back to Him in answer to the Gospel. This full threefold commission should have been fully carried out from the fall of Jerusalem to this day, and it should now become the one immediate and constant concern of the servants of Jesus Christ.

do under the circumstances, and why. Luke otherwise gives the same threefold chronology for the time reaching from the crucifixion of Jesus to His return in glory, only he describes the interval from 70 A. D. to the end, not as being occupied with world-wide evangelization, but thus: "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLIVET PROPHECY, III. "THE END OF THE AGE."

ISRAEL'S FINAL TRIBULATION.

WE HAVE now to look more closely at our Saviour's prediction of the final great tribulation, as given in Matt. 24:14b-28 and Mark 13:14-23. As the latter passage is practically identical literally with the former down to verse 25, and as the three further verses in Matthew furnish entirely new material, we may confine our attention to the former passage (Matt. 24:14b-28).

"14b And then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the Holy Place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: 18 Neither let him that is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and they shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

Several points of leading importance are to be noted here.

1. This passage is altogether a description of a "great tribulation," unparalleled in all previous human history, and never again to be equalled (v. 21).

2. The whole setting is Judaic. The central standpoint is the "Holy Place" (v. 15)—the Jewish temple which is to be built before Christ's return—and Judea as the more general theatre of events (v. 16).

3. In other words, this describes that long-predicted, final visitation of divine wrath upon the apostate Jews in their own land, with which Hebrew prophecy has already made us so familiar.

4. The sign of its commencement in unrestrained fury is that outrage of the sanctuary predicted in Daniel 12:11, which Daniel showed is to occur in the middle of the last seven years; i. e., the seventieth week of years (9:27, compare 7:25), which seventieth week also covers the period of the re-established Hebrew State under Anti-Christ's emperors.

5. The use here of the second person of the pronoun in Jesus' words to the disciples, shows that He addressed them as the representatives, not of the Church, but of "the elect" (vs. 22, 23); i. e., of the believing remnant of Israel anxiously awaiting, in the final stage of the tribulation, the revelation of Christ to rescue them from imminent annihilation (v. 22).

6. Hence this (and all that follows) is a privately given appendix to all Hebrew prophecy, a most notable contribution of features and details added to the Old Testament prophecy of the last days. None of these details are applicable to any time prior to that of Israel's restored statehood,—or, to speak more exactly, prior to that of the last three and one-half years—or to any believers but those who shall be involved in the last "great tribulation" of the Jews in their own land.

7. The aspect of Christ's coming is that of His sudden,

dazzling earthly revelation (v. 27), the only aspect known to pre-apostolic prophecy, or to the times while the Church remained "hidden."

8. Accordingly, the aspect of Christ's coming here presented—being that of avenger of His "elect," the penitent and believing remnant of Israel at the last—is that of destruction to the wicked. It is in this light that verse 28 is to be read, which describes what, in Ezekiel 39:17-22, God calls "My Sacrifice": "And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood."

SIGN OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE IN THE SKY.

Jesus proceeded to depict the appalling omens to occur at the close of the tribulation as the immediate precursors of His appearing in glory and power to earthly view (Mat. 24:29, 30). "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." While Mark's account is identical, Luke's presents further interesting details (21:25-27): "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

These phenomena were frequently noted in the Old Testament prediction in relation to "the day of the Lord"; but never were they before grouped and detailed quite so fully or so exactly located chronologically. One recognizes that Matt. 24:29, 30 expressly answers the question of the disciples in verse 3, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [age]?"

FURTHER FEATURES.

The next feature of the panorama—the concluding feature really—relates to the complete gathering of the scattered remnant of Israel by command of their gracious King (Matt. 24:31): "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to the other." Mark reads (v. 27): "And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." While this final earth-wide regathering of the escaped Israel was frequently recited in Old Testament prediction, yet it is so freshly and so graphically pictured here as to amount almost to a new revelation. It also confirms the position taken that we are still in the midst of purely Hebrew prophecy.

The record of Matthew continues (24:32-35): "Now learn a parable of the fig tree, When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Thus Jesus emphasized the rapidity with which all these things should culminate; for the "generation" living to witness their initiation and progress shall also witness their full completion in His appearing.

Luke's record is worthy of being added (vs. 28-33): "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of yourselves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away."

Here the certainty which is in due season to be had of the immediate imminence of the appearing of Christ is strongly emphasized. But, by whom and at what time is that certainty to be possessed? It is for those to whom the outcome means "redemption," and that is the desperately imperilled penitent remnant of Israel; and it is at the time when the expressly predicted measure of unhindered sway of "the little horn" over the latter-day Israel shall come to its end. The "fig tree" probably refers to the final Jewish State, and "the other trees" to the Gentile nations, so that we are to understand that the international situation of the last days will lend certitude to believing Jews that the crisis has arrived. This accords with all Old Testament prediction; and it shows us that this passage, as well as preceding ones, has no application to the Church and to pre-tribulation days. That is, we are mistaken in quoting anything from this Scripture as relating to us and to our days.

The record of Matthew thus proceeds (vs. 36-44): "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and

giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Even at the end, when the wide-awake believers shall know by definite signs, as has just been shown by the words of Jesus, that the appearing of Christ to earthly view is almost instantly impending, date-fixing will be inadmissible and it will be possible to be caught napping.

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU."

We should right here give place to an earlier prophetic passage found in Luke 17:20-37, which in parts stands in immediate parallelism with portions of Matt. 24. "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

The sense of this passage is not uncertain, although it has stumbled many into some erroneous constructions. These Pharisees must have meant to ask when the Messianic kingdom in that customary sense presented in Hebrew prophecy should come. The question implied that Jesus was not Himself the Messiah, but only a prophet who might be able to answer such a question. Christ's words, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," (or "outward show"—evidence—as the

margin renders it) signified that for the present all inquirers were not to be looking for the Messiah in the final public demonstration of His kingship. It was fully shown in Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah was to "grow up as a root out of a dry ground." It was clearly foretold that outwardly the Messiah should first appear in humiliation and dependence, without assuming at all the offices of a glorious King and without restoring the kingdom to the Jews. So, when He added, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you," (or "among you" as the margin reads) He was just challenging them to meet the evidences that He stood in their midst as the Messiah in the true aspects of His first coming.

The Master followed this reply to the Pharisees with information in private to the disciples, which is nearly all found in scattered portions almost word for word in Matt. 24. "And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And many shall say unto you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that they went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day *when the Son of man is revealed*. In that day, he which shall be upon the house-

top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."

How clear all this is when we simply follow out logically the chain of thought running along from the starting point of the Pharisees' inquiry in regard to the restoration of the Jewish kingdom, and when we recognize that the visible and glorious appearing of the Son of man—taken under consideration privately with the disciples—is not treated of in detail from any other standpoint than the Jewish! Of course, as has already been frequently remarked, we can draw very important and profitable inferences relative to the Church-stage of Christ's return. But there is no profit in straining the passage from its direct and simple sense as it would be understood by the disciples at that time. We should bear in mind that the event here under consideration is Christ's public arrival to earthly sight. Therefore, the illustrations used—of the suddenness of the deluge and of the irruption of the goodman's house—indicate the sudden, unescapable seizure with judgment and catastrophe of the unexpectant ones, and not the sudden rapture of the saints to meet the Lord Jesus in the air. Of course, the principle involved is the same so far as watchfulness is concerned, but Jesus was not referring at all to the rapture of the saints, which was not a revealed matter as yet.

CONCLUSION OF MARK'S RECORD.

Mark concludes his record of this discourse of our Lord with a brief epitome parallel to that of Matthew, but with some important differences of expression (vs. 32-37): "Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."

Here the secrecy regarding the exact date of Christ's arrival to earthly view is even more strongly expressed,—to the effect that, not only to angels even, but to Jesus Himself, at least at that time, the exact time was unknown. (In this connection it is interesting to notice that Rev. 1:1 implies that a new revelation had been placed by the Father in the hands of the glorified Jesus to deliver through John to His servants; this may have included the disclosure to Him of the very time of His second advent.) The very uncertainty expressed here and in Matthew constituted the urgent ground for the injunction to believers of ceaseless, prayerful watching. In verse 34 Jesus shows that he

meant to have this watchfulness observed during all the time of His absence; and verse 37 clearly implies that He meant His injunction not only for those who should be awaiting His coming for the redemption of imperilled Israel, but for all believers, at all times; "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Still there is here no revelation of the Church or of her distinctive attitude of watching for the Lord's coming.

CONCLUSION OF LUKE'S RECORD.

Luke's concluding epitome is even briefer, and yet quite differently expressed (vs. 34-36): "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Here again we are to avoid veering from the perspective of this whole address upon the coming of Christ in Hebrew aspect exclusively; the perspective is concerning that of His arrival on earth to rescue the remnant of Israel and to give her the promised kingdom in the earth. And yet the language of vs. 34, 36 is adaptable equally well, word for word, to the Church's present watching; and even verse 35 can also be accommodated thereto. It would, however, be an entire misconception to draw from verse 36, for instance, as the writer himself did for many years, the teaching that we are there enjoined to preserve a spiritual state which will insure our being caught up in the rapture prior to "all these things." The writer sees in other Scriptures the evidence of a pre-tribulation rapture, and not of all believers either; but he has come to see

that in this passage no such inference can be found. It is to be said also that the word "escape" here evidently does not mean to avoid, but to be saved out from.

WATCHING.

It may not be any real digression to offer a few words at this point upon the subject of watching for the coming of Christ, as it impresses and informs our minds from a natural and candid reading of this discourse.

As we have seen, the charge to "Watch" is not given in this address of Christ to His Church in relation to her rapture; but it relates wholly, so far as the record and its revelation reach, only to Christ's public appearing from the standpoint of Jewish interests. Watching for this event is not represented as an attitude to be maintained from first to last throughout this age as though the event might occur at any time. Such watchfulness as Christ enjoined to be observed during the entire time of His absence, was altogether that which harmonized with the vast ranges of events which He clearly predicted should transpire before the event of His reappearing. He predicted, as we have seen, many thrilling events to transpire before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. Then, His words regarding world-wide evangelism certainly imply a long stretch of time. Finally, He explicitly predicted events crowding and vividly distinguishing the epoch of the concluding great tribulation. It is really only in connection with these last stages that He introduces the injunction to watch. And He did this in relation to a time and to certain circumstances when believers should know that the time was very nigh, while still ignorant of any exact date. Until that time comes, when believers shall know that the time is nigh, they will, of course, know that the time is not nigh. Watching, therefore, prior to that time cannot have a chronological meaning; i. e., looking directly for the event to occur.

It comes to light, then, that the prime essence of watching, as relates to believers throughout the dispensation, does not spring from the possibility of the immediate occurrence of the event or consist in maintaining the attitude of Christ's possible arrival at any moment. This attitude is neither called for nor warranted even at this present stage of progress in the dispensation. We must remember that, however we may take the injunction to watch to ourselves, we certainly must not change its meaning from that which it had to the Apostles when originally spoken. As we have seen, both their questions and Christ's answers compel the conclusion that the injunction was given to and through them exclusively with reference to His visible return, and also along with a clear unfolding to them of this vast panorama of prior events reaching, first, to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., then through the long period of world-wide evangelization, and, finally, through the spectacular period of "the end," an epoch yet to come, terminating not in the Parousia, but in the Epiphany of our Lord.

It must, therefore, never be insisted that we are under injunction or encouragement to watch in such a sense as to exclude from our minds the certainty of any intervening events. Surely, the practical and essential idea in watching, so far as it relates to us, consists in that of occupying till He comes, of filling the world's need of the Gospel with its ample supplies, of keeping loose from the trend and attractions of this age, of illustrating in this day the principles of that coming day, and of refusing all reward and praise until it can be received from the hands of the returning Christ. There are things most essential to be obtained from the Lord at His coming through a very practical kind of watching, whether we live to see His coming or die a thousand years before it.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OLIVET PROPHECY, IV.

MATTHEW'S EXTENSION.

WE ARE indebted to Matthew exclusively for the remainder of this great prophetic discourse of our Lord.

PARABLE OF THE FAITHFUL STEWARD.

The next paragraph consists of 24:45-51:

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming: and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

These verses give rich promise and stern warning to spiritual heads in regard to fulfilling their office of feeding, and not abusing the little flock, after the true attitude of watching for the Chief Shepherd to appear. It is strictly parallel to Old Testament prophecies, which foreshow to spiritual rulers in Israel in the last days the appropriate rewards which they shall receive at Messiah's hands when He returns to redeem and bless His needy remnant. Of course, the principle applies alike to spiritual rulers and ministers in the Church; but the passage is to be held in its direct intention to its Jewish and kingdom standpoint.

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and for you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (25: 1-13).

The caution expressed by Jesus in this passage is addressed to those in their private relations to Him who profess to be watching for His coming. It is represented that those, who in the last days shall watch for His coming, are to be likened to virgins going out by night to meet the bridegroom on his way "to the marriage," in order to escort him with a torch-light procession. The essential thing for them is to be amply supplied with oil against all possible contingency of delay in the bridegroom's appearing. Hence, the only point of application is the admonition for professed watchers for Christ's appearing to maintain a full readiness clear through till the actual appearing of the King.

It is easy to perceive that the readiness Jesus urges here is one of fulness of heart and understanding in the Spirit, as is symbolized by the oil in the wise virgins' vessels. How forcibly Daniel had already emphasized this preparation of the final Jewish remnant for their Messiah's royal appearing: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do

wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (12:10). As has been said, the principle underlying this admonition applies to the attitude of the Church at present in relation to the hour of her rapture to meet Jesus as her Bridegroom in the sky; but much misconception and doubtful teaching, as well as unhappy controversy, would be avoided, if this passage were not taken as a prediction, or admonition, relating to the rapture of the prepared saints. Other Scriptures indeed show that just such a division will occur among professed watchers for Christ at the rapture; but it would seem quite enough to deter us from very common teaching on this passage, to note that the virgins are not the bride, or even members of the bridal party. Further discrimination becomes imperative when it is noticed that the word "marriage" is translated properly by the R. V. "marriage feast." The custom was for the bridegroom to go to the bride's house to wed her and some time later in the night to take her to her new home and life with him. It is on this return trip that the torchlight procession and the marriage feast occur which is pictured in the parable. The virgins "go out" to participate in these final stages of the event, which correspond to our Lord's return from the skies with His bride, the Church, to engage her with Him in the great kingdom festival of the thousand years. The waiting virgins represent the watchful remnant of Israel awaiting the reappearing of their King, the Church's Bridegroom.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

The record of Matthew proceeds without diversion with the Parable of the Talents (24:14-30):

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability;

and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This parable urges the duty of the faithful use of the valuables left in earthly hands by Christ during all His absence, that, at His coming again, He may find, not only His original capital intact, but also good profit from its able administration. In principle it certainly applies forcibly to the Church as the main custodian of this trust during the present dispensation. But the causal conjunction "for," with which the passage opens, shows that it is to be understood, so far as revelation is considered, as a presentation of responsibility to spiritual trust from the same standpoint as that of all the

preceding parts of the whole discourse. That is, there is no diversion from the standpoint of Christ's visible arrival in the earth and of His dealings with servants then yet living and responsible in the earth. In other words, the standpoint of the passage *as revelation* is Jewish and still in the direct line of Hebrew prophecy. Nothing in the passage constitutes any prediction with reference to the Church and to her appearing before Christ to give account unto Him in the skies.

The somewhat earlier discourse of Christ found in Luke 19:11-27 may be taken up here.

PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

“And as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: wherefore then gavest thou not my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto

every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

While we can make most profitable and pertinent use and adaptation of this parable to ourselves in purely Christian respects, yet how evident it is that the whole treatment is that of the matter which occasioned the Lord's use of the parable; namely, the question when the restoration of the kingdom to the Jews under their Messiah should occur. There is perfect candor and straightforwardness on Jesus' part in dealing with just what was upon the public mind. It would have been incongruous and malapropos for Him to deal even enigmatically with another subject, or to be guilty of speaking in any "double sense."

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS.

It is now as a perfectly logical conclusion of a self-consistent panoramic view, that the climax of this great predictive discourse of our Lord from the standpoint of the Jewish kingdom is presented in Matt. 25:31-46.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit [take His seat] upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these

my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

This is all clear, if we inject into the passage no preconceptions or borrowed construction. Hebrew prophecy is full of the treatment that awaits the Gentile nations of the world from the hands of the returning King of the Jews. Old Testament history is largely an account of His dealings with Gentile powers corresponding to their dealings with His people, the Jews. While clothed somewhat in parabolic figure, yet this passage plainly pictures the unparalleled International Convention or Assize, which Jesus will call and compel after taking His place on the throne of David, in order to determine what national governments shall be allowed to continue during the millennial and more distant future, and what awards all the nations which He spares shall politically receive,—such awards being decided upon the basis of the treatment accorded by those nations to the Jews, especially, we may safely presume, during the time of the "great tribulation" of Jacob. This political understanding of the passage does not rob us of its best uses. In the first place, the best use of any Scripture is never anything but its straightforward and natural use; we are best prepared to make profitable adaptation of it to other uses, only when we have so taken it for its first use. And, in this passage, we see that Jesus will apply the same principle in determining the near and the remote destinies of nations that, ac-

cording to law and prophets and apostles alike, He makes applicable to individuals.

Surely the duty of heavenly pity and of practical Christlike ministries to the unfortunate and miserable is, by way of principle, enforced by this passage upon us all and at all times. We can legitimately draw from this passage assurance and warning regarding future awards, according as we fulfill or neglect the everyday ministries of Jesus in common human relations. But the question before us is, not what practical improvement we can make of this passage, but what it unfolds in the way of further predictive relation to Christ's second coming; for that is the subject introduced by Chapter 24 and pointedly treated of all the way through to this passage as its climax. Does this passage occupy still the accustomed standpoint of Hebrew prophecy; and does it present things relative to Christ's coming as Judge and King in the earth, the King of the Jews and, as such, the supreme sovereign in the earth? It certainly is from just this standpoint that the passage is to be read, and not from any new predictive standpoint. It plainly shows that, for mercilessness to the children of Jacob whom Jesus here calls "these my brethren,"—especially in the time of the final and supreme tribulation under the ruthless heel of the world-tyrant, the "little horn"—some nations shall be wiped off as organized and distinct nations from the map of the millennial earth; while others will be appropriately and royally blessed with the rich privileges of the millennial age. This is according to the Abrahamic Covenant: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3).

This somewhat detailed study of prophecy in the Gospels serves to show that prediction there is still exclusively from the Hebrew standpoint, and that Christ's coming is viewed only in its public, earthly and political aspect. It is true that this event is forecast from a new

position, that of the actual rejection of Christ in His first advent by the Jewish rulers, and from that of the immediately impending desolation and dispersion of the Jews. The great tribulation, and the final signs and accompaniments of the revelation of the Messiah in kingly aspect, are brought out in such fresh and vivid light as to constitute almost an entirely new disclosure. And the urgent need of instant readiness for His sudden appearing at an uncertain day and hour is more vividly and impressively emphasized than ever before. Yet, invaluable as this discourse is to us all, still it goes no further predictively than to bring Old Testament Hebrew prophecy up to the new date and position four hundred years after Old Testament prophecy had ceased.

The matter of information, as well as the material of instruction and admonition relative to her occupation and to her watching during this dispensation, is of incalculable value to the Church. Indeed Jesus addressed these disciples as those who were to inaugurate the intervening dispensation of world-wide and age-long evangelization, and as those who were to set the standards of this dispensation. While they were addressed as Jewish witnesses of the rejected but returning Christ, and as being themselves the representatives of that final remnant of saved Israel, yet the responsibilities laid upon them, and the corresponding admonitions addressed to them, were to be fulfilled by them as the after-heads of the Church, and they were through them to be taught to the Church for unremitting observance all the days of Christ's absence (Matt. 28:18-20).

In this connection, reference may be made again to the parables grouped together in Matt. 13. Some may ask if they are not prophecies relating, not to the Jews, but to the Church. "Prophecies"—No! A prophecy is an open disclosure of coming events, while these parables were such concealments as to demand inquiry as to their meaning. It was thereby that careless hearers were

eliminated from earnest inquirers. But these parables do not relate to events which are to transpire during this dispensation; they treat of interior principles and conditions of a spiritual character. The parables of the Tares and the Drag-net include some predictive element, but it is all from the same standpoint of earthly judgment and separation upon the arrival of Christ in His public office.

This careful first-hand and straightforward reading of prophecy in the Gospels should suitably prepare us to anticipate eagerly and to apprehend readily the post-pentecostal prophecies to which Jesus pointed the Apostles forward so impressively in the words of John 16: 12, 13, 15: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself [i. e., independently of me]; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.....He shall take of mine, and show it unto you."

In concluding the study of this most important section of prophecy the following will serve as a graphic outline and a careful harmony of the same (page 338).

MARK 13 AND LUKE 21 HARMONIZED WITH MATTHEW

23:34—25:46.

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
A. The Basis,—in three stages	23:34-39		
1. The Impending Judgment upon the Jewish Nation, 70 A. D.	34-37		
Repetition of the same to Disciples in private	24:1, 2	13:1, 2	21:5, 6
2. Indefinite Period of Jerusalem's Desolation	23:38		
3. Return of Christ with Welcome from the Nation	39		
B. Enlargement (of Matthew 23:34-39)	24:3-35		
Occasion for the same,—Two questions of Disciples	3	13:3, 4	21:7
1. Fulfillment of "these things" to first "end," 32-70 A. D.	4-13	13:5-13	21:8-19
Special Sketch of Jerusalem's Fall			21:20-24a
2. Period of Desolation and World-wide Evangelization, 70 A. D.—? A. D.	14a		21:24b
3. The Age—"end" and the Coming of Christ, ? A. D.—? A. D.			
(1) Tribulation of Jews (3½ years, See Daniel)	14b-25	13:14-23	
(2) Added Caution	26-28		
(3) The Revelation of Christ	29, 30	13:24-26	21:25-27
(4) An Initial Prognosis	31	13:27	21:28
(5) The Regathering of Israel			
(6) The Final and Complete Prognosis	32-35	13:28-31	21:29-33
C. Watchful Waiting			
1. Uncertainty of the Exact Time	36	13:32	
2. Illustration taken from the Flood ..	37-41		
3. Charge to Watch as sober Householders	42-51	13:32-37	21:34-36
D. Parable of the Ten Virgins	25:1-13		
E. Parable of the Talents	14-30		
F. Judgment of the Gentile Nations	31-46		

PART VI

Prophetic Standpoint of the Present Age

CHAPTER I.

A NEW POSITION OF PROPHETIC OUTLOOK.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN TAKING up the further prophecies of the New Testament, we will still hold the Book of the Revelation in reserve and separately classify the apostolical prophecies prior thereto. But before dealing with prophecy in the Apostolical Epistles, it is of unusual importance to obtain a clear conception of the new dispensation under which prophecy points forward to the great final consummation ever in view from the very beginning of the Bible.

REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STAGE OF PROGRESS.

We have observed how much it meant for prophetic watchers to be looking ahead afresh, after an interval of four or five centuries of prophetic standstill and silence, from such a thrilling advanced standpoint as that of the actual incarnate presence of the promised One in His first advent. And no wonder! For this was really the beginning of the consummation of the ages,—as Paul says, “the ends of the world to come.” But “the end of the world” (Heb. 9:26) is a very comprehensive and expansive term covering a vast stretch of time.

Yet we have seen too that, while He who came was the adorable Son of the Highest and the promised Son of man Himself,—Son of Abraham and Son of David, heir to the world and heir to the throne of Israel—yet He was present without the form and glory of God, despised of the proud, the servant of the lowliest, the prophet like unto Moses, so devoid of His proper majesty that the

publicans and the sinners might draw nigh unto Him unabashed to hear from His lips the words of God,—gracious words such as man never spake before.

We have seen that this extreme condescension of the Lord's presence in His first appearing necessitated very special means of disclosing and of discerning His identity. While everything in Jesus' person, mien, words and works perfectly revealed the Son of God in the form assumed, yet it required a heart humbly disposed to discern the Son of God in such meekness; it required a heart longing for grace and truth to discover the source and the fulness thereof in Jesus of Nazareth; it required willingness to forsake one's earthly all and follow as divine Master One who had not where to lay His own head; it required close acquaintance and full complacency with lowly, seemingly trivial and non-flattering signs to look for and to accept their fulfillment in One who was without form or comeliness; above all, it required the revelation of the heavenly Father by the Holy Spirit to perceive and receive in the stranger from Nazareth the pre-existent Christ, the eternal Son of God, however wonderful might be the miraculous signs wrought by Him.

And we have seen that, while consistently following a course adapted to a suitable and saving revelation of Himself to rulers and people of the Jews alike,—revelation of Himself as the long expected Redeemer and King—yet He never gave the slightest encouragement to the Jews, any more than He did to the devil on the mount of temptation, that He was then present to ascend the throne promised to Him. On the contrary, He had His face set, and He turned others' attention exclusively toward quite different impending events. These events were five in number, following one another in swift succession: 1. His Crucifixion. 2. His Burial. 3. His Resurrection. 4. His Glorification. 5. His Gift of the Holy Spirit, to conduct a lengthy dispensation of world-

wide evangelization, until in power and great glory He should return from heaven as King of the Jews, as King of kings, and Lord of lords in all the earth.

A NEW STAGE OF PROGRESS.

Now, just as the previous Part of the New Testament study—that of Gospel prophecy—occupied the inspiring new standpoint of large prophetic fulfillment in the incarnate appearing and ministry of Jesus Christ, so the present Part—that of pre-Revelation apostolical prophecy—occupies the marvellous new position of the actual accomplishment of this fivefold group of events. It is highly important, therefore, to devote sufficient study to get a clear comprehension of the remarkable standpoint from which apostolical prophecy looks forward to the end. Especially is this true from the fact that this new stage of progress is really only the completion of what the previous stage inaugurated.

The five events just referred to were no afterthought, not definitely and exclusively contemplated in the very nativity and the very inaugural of Jesus in His first advent and ministry; they were no interlude in a line of progress logically embracing a quite different inception and conclusion; they were no surprise to any but blinded eyes; for these five events form an essential and fundamental part of the very *trunk line* of the prophetic program according to Old Testament prophecy. So true and so paramount is this fact as to render the matter worthy of further and very careful examination. If fulfillment here, if progress here, is not the exact replica of prophecy writ large and plain, what assurance is there that what is yet future is amply and plainly revealed, and that it will be identically fulfilled?

“ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.”

This is the criterion by which every proof that Jesus was the Christ must be established. In every particular

the Christ must be identified in Jesus of Nazareth by clear and exact Old Testament requirement, or there is a fatal flaw in the argument for the Messiahship of Jesus.

It is customary to recognize that the appearing of the Son of God in the humility of man was well-known to Old Testament prophecy. That He was to appear, however, in two advents,—the one in humiliation, the other in glory—not only was overlooked to a great extent by the Jews in the days of Christ on the earth, but is largely overlooked by Christians today, although the Bible is so clear and full upon the subject. Scarcely any one, however, in those days perceived that Old Testament prophecy required that the Messiah should die an accursed death, lie three days dead in the grave, be raised again in the same body from the dead, ascend in body to the Father, be glorified bodily at His right hand, and send the Holy Spirit in the fulness of His name to conduct a whole new dispensation, ere He should reign visibly as King of the Jews. And too few Bible readers and teachers of today perceive the prominence of this program in Old Testament Scriptures. Yet the New Testament confronts us arrestingly with emphasis upon the fact that the highway of Messianic fulfillment must progress strictly by these stages, so that no thought of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel was ever legitimately involved in the first advent of Christ, that consummation standing, according to all Old Testament prediction—and not merely by some subsequent alternative or “postponement”—removed from the time of the first advent by a whole new, important and protracted dispensation, or age. In other words, the clear, strong voice of Old Testament prophecy outlines in the Messianic program a greater dispensation to succeed the Mosaic age ere the kingdom age should arrive. And this greater prior age was to proceed from the unparalleled position of the accomplishment of the aforementioned events in the experience of the incarnate Christ.

Now Jesus did not conceal an entire dependence on His part upon His Father's word for the direction of His every step, as well as for His knowledge in all respects. He confessed: "Verily, verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do," John 5: 19. Also, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself [independently of the Father], my witness is not true" (vs. 30, 31).

And it is to be noted that, while Jesus was in constant secret communion with the Father through the Holy Spirit, yet the holy Scriptures—of the Old Testament, of course—were to Him the standard and authoritative vehicle of the Father's word, the lamp unto His feet, the light unto His path. A glimpse into His real occupation during the thirty years of delay before entering upon public ministry is afforded by that picture of the twelve-year old boy in the temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors,—leading Bible expositors—both hearing them and asking them questions." Already had he so grown in wisdom of God's Word, that "all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers" (Luke 2: 46, 47). And when Jesus, after the Father had so plainly witnessed to His sonship at His baptism in Jordan, was assailed by Satan's proposals to misapply His prerogatives, He brought Satan's efforts to confusion by answering, "It is written.....It is written againFor it is written." Now, would it not be surprising not to find Jesus foreseeing and clearly forecasting, under full Scriptural light, the entire earthly pathway lying before Him in His first advent? We cannot reasonably conceive of anything else and, as a fact, we find just this thing.

CHAPTER II.

JESUS' OWN TEACHING REGARDING THE END FOR WHICH HE FIRST CAME.

FORECAST ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTISTS.

IN VIEW of what has been said about the bold position of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, glorification and Pentecostal gift of the Spirit in the pathway of His first advent, it comes as a surprise not to find Him referring to this objective of His advent until comparatively late in His ministry. This is particularly noticeable in reading the narratives of the Synoptists, Matthew, Mark and Luke. But this is not indicative of uncertainty regarding those events as the final objective of Christ's coming then to earth, or of any alternative course that might have been possible. Rather does a careful reading bring to light the fact that Jesus consulted timeliness in His process of leading forward especially His followers in the light regarding Himself. Accordingly He waited until His disciples had first received full revelation that He was verily the Christ, the Son of God, before He began to set before them these impending events, which to them were so unexpected, so mysterious and so unwelcome. The order of events at this juncture is important and helpful.

Such hostility against the claim and the popularity of Jesus had arisen among the rulers of the Jews at Jerusalem, that He did not go up thither at the time of the third Passover, a year before His death. But, as recorded in John 6:4-15, Jesus appeared before the vast multitudes of Passover pilgrims assembling by the Sea of Galilee on the north-east, and there He wrought the miracle of feeding the five thousand with the loaves

and fishes. This so affected the popular enthusiasm that Jesus was obliged to elude the determination to "take Him by force, to make him a king." On the following day, at Capernaum, He addressed the complaining multitudes, teaching them for the first time plainly, although in figurative language, that they needed Him for eternal, and not merely physical and temporal, subsistence, and that nothing could ensure to them true life for the present, and resurrection at the last day, but to be partakers through faith of His flesh and of His blood. This, of course, implied His sacrificial work, although the people could not comprehend the matter at all, were stumbled in their reason, and "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with him," John 6: 66. The effect with the Twelve, however, was quite the opposite. When Jesus challenged them, "Will ye also go away," "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (vs. 67-69).

For the next six months, while our Lord still remained in the north, yet His public ministry in Galilee was greatly diminished, He was much more in retirement, even spending considerable time altogether outside of Galilee, at least outside its familiar districts. It was while "in the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi" that He closely questioned His disciples as to men's opinion regarding His identity. Turning the question searchingly to them, the fervent confession was drawn from Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Evidently Jesus found in this confession the maturity and the virility of faith that He had long been cultivating in His disciples. With Peter it was not an opinion or a mere belief; it was a divine revelation, as Jesus declared. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 16: 16, 17).

The solemn and profound words which Jesus added render it the more evident that this was a crucial point in the progress of the program of Jesus: "And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock* I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (vs. 18, 19).

In these words Jesus means us to understand that the truth uttered by Peter is the bed-rock, or fundamental truth, on which His Church stands and is upbuilt, and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail; and Jesus means us to understand that in possessing by revelation, and in openly confessing, this fundamental, Peter, true to his name—stone of the rock—was proving himself to be *of the rock itself*, of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God, even as must be the case with everybody else who is to constitute a living stone in the Church that is built upon the impregnable rock of Jesus Christ as Son of the living God. Jesus also shows that, by thus sharing in the Church as the living edifice of believers in Christ Jesus as the Son of God, any one is entitled to authority and power on earth in the accomplishment of the will and work of heaven.

It is still more evident, that Jesus was guiding His mission just here through a most important juncture, from the fact that, instead of directing His disciples to blazon this confession abroad, He "charged [them].... that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ" (v. 20).

Just here the Gospel narrative continues very signif-

* Jesus' use of the future tense here—"I will build my Church"—does not imply that His Church had not yet begun to be built, but only that henceforth it should continue to be built upon the same eternal Rock as now manifested in Jesus of Nazareth.

icantly: "*From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised again the third day*" (v. 21). How deeply the disciples needed this instruction, and how timely it was now for Jesus to begin systematically so to teach them, is made evident by the way in which Peter at once fell into the snare of Satan in impertinently rebuking his Master for forecasting such things. After sternly rebuking Satan in Peter for this carnal counsel, Jesus proceeded to teach His disciples the necessity of their sharing also with Him present crucifixion to the world, in order to share with Him when He should hereafter come back in the glory of the Kingdom (Matt. 16:24-27). He then declared that certain of them should live to see "the Son of man coming in his kingdom." This otherwise obscure statement was made intelligible and was fulfilled about a week later, when Jesus on a mount manifested Himself to Peter, James and John, transfigured with heavenly majesty and glory. At the same time Moses and Elijah appeared glorified and talking with Jesus about that impending decease of Jesus at Jerusalem. (How evident that these things were prominently revealed beforehand in Old Testament times!) And then the Father designated Jesus afresh as His beloved Son, to whom the Apostles were to give faithful hearing. Again Jesus enjoined entire secrecy regarding this remarkable scene "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matt. 17:9). "And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mark 9:10).

It is now a striking fact that the teachings, which Jesus from this point impressed upon the minds of His disciples regarding these culminating features of His first advent, are repeatedly founded by Him upon the Scriptures,—of course those of the Old Testament. All

three Synoptists carefully note that, not long after the Transfiguration, our Lord took final departure with the Twelve from Galilee, the chief theater of His ministry, for Judea and Jerusalem. He soon took opportunity while on the way to lay clearly before the Twelve again what, according to the ancient Scriptures, was to meet Him there. "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are *written by the prophets* concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: And this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken" (Mark 10:32 and Luke 18:31-34). Jesus soon had occasion to re-emphasize the purpose of His first advent: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). And we may justly assume that Jesus frequently reiterated these things privately in the hearing of the disciples.

After arriving in Jerusalem, Jesus less explicitly, but none the less certainly, intimated to the Jewish rulers and populace these events which were drawing so nigh. He well knew that the rulers of the Jews were lusting for His blood. Under the parable of the vineyard and the husbandman (Matt. 21:33-40 and Luke 20:9-20) Jesus unmasked and further infuriated these enemies, by intimating their purpose to add to their persecutions of the bygone prophets, who had been sent unto them to gather fruit for the husbandman, the intentional murder of the heir to the vineyard of Israel Himself, that they

might seize the inheritance for themselves. Never did Jesus seek to escape this murderous purpose, although He evaded its consummation until the preappointed time.

As that time now arrived, Jesus was very explicit in apprising the Apostles of what was at hand. As He sat with them at the table that last night He said: "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me"; and He added, "The Son of man goeth as it is *written of Him.*" Then after Judas the betrayer had gone out, Jesus appropriated bread and wine before the eleven Apostles, for the special purpose of symbolizing the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood for many for the remission of sins. Just before going forth from the upper room, Jesus warned Peter of the sifting that he was about to endure and of the shameful denial he should make of his Master, and Jesus explained the awful situation about to arise in the words: "For I say unto you, that *this that is written* must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end" (Luke 22:37).

Afterwards, as they were on the way to the Garden, Jesus said unto the Eleven, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for *it is written*, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee" (Matt. 26: 21, 24, 26-32; Mark 14: 18, 26-28). When submitting to forcible arrest, Jesus waived intervention in His behalf, saying, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to the Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall *the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?*" (Matt. 26: 53, 54). And Matthew adds: "But all this was done, *that the Scriptures of the [Old Testament] prophets might be fulfilled*" (v. 56).

FORECAST ACCORDING TO JOHN.

Little reference has been made thus far to John's Gospel because it is worthy of separate attention upon the subject before us. John's Gospel is unique, in that it traces from the very beginning of Christ's ministry the sacrificial nature of His mission to the earth at that time. This does not signify that John himself at the time was discerning this any more than other Apostles; but it seems evident that, writing the book long after the events, he intended to have the credentials of Jesus as Christ the Son of God found in this very sacrificial purpose of the first advent.

That John the Baptist's annunciation as given in Matthew, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," could not have meant to intimate that the Messiah was then open to receive the throne of Israel, is evident from the fact that in John 1:29 he introduced Jesus to the priests and Levites, which had come to him the day before from Jerusalem inquiring if he were the Christ, in the words: "Behold the *Lamb of God* which taketh away the sin of the world." In like manner John turned his own disciples to Jesus, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God" (v. 36). And that Jesus, in announcing, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15), could not have meant to promote an excitement of popular expectation of the restoration of the Jewish kingdom at that time, is evident from the way in which according to the opening pages of John's Gospel, He pointed Nicodemus directly to the accursed cross, saying, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the

world; but that the world through him might be saved" (3:14-17).

The early Judean ministry of Jesus, recorded only in John (3:22), furnished occasion for partisan followers of John to construe Jesus' ministry as a sharp competition to John's (3:23-36). On account of this, Jesus most magnanimously, as well as discreetly, withdrew into the utter obscurity of Nazareth, there to stay until John's mission should be at an end. (John 4:1-3, 43, 44. Compare John 4:45 with Mat. 4:12, 13). On His way to this place of privacy Jesus was held up for two days of blessed ministry at Samaria. Now, it is noticeable that His revelation of Himself to the Samaritans was such as to call forth from them the testimony, "we know that this is indeed the Christ, *the Saviour of the world*" (4:42). This shows that Jesus was revealing Himself as the promised One in the character of atoning Redeemer rather than as yet as the King of Israel.

It has already been noted that in John 6 Jesus took the occasion of the unbounded popularity accorded Him in Galilee, in consequence of His miracle of the loaves and fishes, to chill the carnal enthusiasm of the multitudes who would "take him by force, to make him a king," by teaching them that except they ate Him—ate His flesh and drank His blood—as the only heavenly and living nourishment, they had no life in them.

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.

John 7 brings us down to the time of Christ's attendance at Jerusalem upon the Feast of Tabernacles a few months before His death. A highly significant passage is found in vs. 37-39: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. [This signifies personal spiritual life from Jesus.] He that believeth on me, *as the Scripture hath said*, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. [This means

abundant spiritual ministry, as John goes on to explain]. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

Long before, Jesus had told the Samaritan woman of the water “springing up into everlasting life.” Here is emphasized a “supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” which pours out in abundant ministry for others. Two things are here predicated of this outflowing of the Holy Spirit from the followers of Jesus Christ. First, that “the Scriptures hath said”; that is, that the Old Testament prophecy abundantly testifies to such enduement of believers by the incarnate Christ. Secondly, that such enduement, however, must wait for the glorification of the Son of man.

Bible reading and Bible teaching need at this point to be careful and discriminating.

1. It is to be noted that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not a New Testament doctrine alone, but that it is also a cardinal doctrine of the Old Testament. In the light of the words of Jesus here—“as the Scripture hath said”—one needs to search out in the Old Testament the prominence of the promise of the Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit. As an example, it needs to be seen that the Levitical observance of the “Feast of Weeks” (Pentecost), as described in Lev. 23:15-21 and Deut. 16: 9-12, has typical reference to the giving of the Holy Spirit to which Jesus is referring in John 7: 38, 39. The distinctive feature of that observance was the presenting in the temple of two wave loaves of bread, in the dough and leavened, as the first fruits of the whole new yearly supply of flour and meal for domestic use. The offering of these two loaves sanctified the new year’s supply and authorized its free use by Israel. So was typified the gift by the glorified Jesus of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost as the inauguration of a new dispensational supply of the Son

of God as mankind's living bread through the Holy Ghost.

2. It is plain that the words, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet given," do not mean that the Holy Ghost was never before given at all. That would be an obvious and flagrant contradiction of Old Testament record, according to which we may plainly see that throughout Old Testament times the regenerating, sanctifying and enduing bestowment of the Holy Spirit was freely enjoyed by believers, and that the only trouble then, as now, was that God was much more ready to give than His people were to receive. Neither do the facts recorded justify making the contrast that in Old Testament times the Spirit was given to only a few and only upon them, while in New Testament times He is given to all believers and within them.

3. Too much importance can scarcely be attached to the words, "because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The peculiar gift of the Holy Spirit under consideration had to await the *glorification of Jesus*, that is, the return of the Son of God in His capacity as Jesus of Nazareth to His preincarnate glory with the Father. Never before had the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father through His Son incarnate. And while Jesus had been endowed without measure of the Spirit, and while He had given the Holy Spirit to His followers in all respects thus far appropriate, yet not before His glorification could Jesus receive of the Father and fulfil to His followers the particular promise of the gift of the Spirit predicted by the Old Testament for the times of the glorified incarnate Messiah.

Are we left in ignorance as to why this must be the case? By no means! For one thing, Jesus had not yet gone all the way through with the Holy Ghost. He was conceived as child of man by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit was upon Him without measure as a growing boy; there was no stint of the Spirit upon Him as the Father's

incarnate child of twelve years, neither was He lacking in the fulness of the Spirit for the after eighteen years of advancement to the full stature of a mature man in Nazareth. But yet He was not prepared for one word or deed of His public ministry until at Jordan the Spirit came upon Him for that purpose. And He had not yet by His own blood "through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14). Not yet had He been "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). So, our passage teaches us, Jesus must wait until He should be glorified by the Holy Spirit in "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" before He could bestow the Holy Spirit upon believers as the Spirit of His incarnate glory. It is manifest that the distinctiveness of the Pentecostal coming of the Holy Spirit was that He came as the witness, the manifestation, the Spirit of the glorified Jesus. This is the distinction of the present dispensation, not that it is "the dispensation of the Holy Ghost"—for every dispensation is a dispensation of the Holy Ghost, and not only of the Holy Ghost but of the Father and of the Son as well—but that it is the dispensation of the glorified Jesus as manifested in and through His followers by the gift and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. But more of this further on.

It was in these same days that, according to John 8:28, Jesus with special explicitness declared to the hostile rulers of the Jews the manner of His death at their hands: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he." And Chapter 10, the Shepherd chapter, belongs to the same days. In this passage Jesus is freer still in declaring His impending sacrificial death. "I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I

have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (vs. 15, 17, 18). How mistaken it would be to fail to see that Jesus never had a thought Himself or warranted the idea in others that He had come into the world for any other object than to lay down His life as a sacrifice for sins, and not as yet to have anything to do with the throne of Israel! He would otherwise have violated and denied all Old Testament prophecy, and He would have been contravening the commandment of His Father regarding the purpose for which He had sent Him into the world.

CHRONOLOGY OF PASSION WEEK.

An attentive reader will be clearly impressed with the feature of detailed and precise chronology running through the Gospel by John. This serves as an important guide to us in tracing out the exactness with which Jesus conformed to the requirements of Old Testament types and prophecies upon coming to the actual events which were the final objective of His first advent. To the Jews, and to any careful Bible students, the evidences that Jesus is the Christ would prove wholly defective, if in any particular what was written before failed to be exactly fulfilled in such important matters. The special field of our attention at this point embraces Chapters 12-21.

"Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany," 12:1. Jesus could not have made this journey on the Sabbath, and there could not have been six days between the Sabbath and the Passover of the crucifixion. Hence He must have arrived in Bethany before the Sabbath preceding Passover. It is true that, supposing Him to have come to Bethany on Friday, the six days would terminate two days before the Passover, if we follow the common view that Jesus was crucified on Friday. But we are really shut up to Friday as the day

of His arriving in Bethany; and it will soon be seen that that is the date required by what is "written," even though it brings the date of crucifixion on Wednesday instead of Friday.

That Friday evening would be the beginning of Saturday, or the Jewish Sabbath. At the supper which the Bethany friends made for Jesus that evening, Mary anointed the Master's feet with the precious nard, of which Jesus said, "*against the day of my burying hath she kept this*" (v. 7). This supper seems to have attracted many of the Jews, to see Jesus who had but recently brought Lazarus back from the grave and to see Lazarus who had had such an experience. "But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death [as well as Jesus]; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus" (vs. 9-11). "On the next day," that is, after the arrival of Jesus at Bethany; namely, on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath,—the same day as that on which Mary had anointed Him, only that it was night time in the latter case and day time in the former—Jesus entered Jerusalem for the first time openly as the Messianic Prince, "sitting upon an ass's colt" "as it is written," and receiving the honor of the King of Israel from the children and the simple-minded folk (vs. 12-15).

All these things were significant, they were Messianic evidences, as is shown by verse 16: "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified [and they had received the illuminating Spirit of glory], then remembered they that these things were *written of him*, and that they had done these things unto him." In the light of the rest of the chapter, it is easy to divine what "these things" signified as matters of Messianic evidence.

Beginning with verse 28, Jesus most openly speaks of His impending sacrifice and glorification. He says that, so far from asking the Father to save him from this hour,

"for this cause came I unto this hour" (v. 27). He said, "And I, if I be *lifted up from the earth*, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying *what death he should die*" (vs. 32, 33). But "the people answered him, We have heard out of the law [rightly so, in its reference] that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" (v. 34). Just so! As has been seen far back, none but a resurrected son was promised David to succeed forever to his throne. See 1 Chron. 17: 11, 12, compared with Acts 2: 30, 31. The rest of the chapter shows that this Sabbath day was the time when Jesus was rejected unto death by the rulers and when He rejected the nation unto its doom.

Now, the law of Moses required that the paschal lamb, which was to be slain in the afternoon of the fourteenth of the month and eaten that night, the fifteenth of the month, be set apart for sacrifice on the tenth day of the month, four days in advance. This dedication unto sacrificial death should by all means be clearly fulfilled in the case of Jesus as the Lamb of God. It was on that tenth day, in the night, that Mary anointed Jesus, as He said, "against the day of my burying." It was thus that the tender, believing consecration of God's Lamb for sacrifice was effected. On the same day a few hours later the rulers of the Holy City murderously and disbelievingly set apart God's Lamb for the sacrifice. Psalm Sabbath then (the seventh day of the week, not "Palm Sunday," the first day of the week) was the day signalized by the consecration of the Lamb of God to His sacrificial death.

To this agrees the further chronology of John as well as "that which was written" in the ancient Scriptures. If Saturday was the tenth of Nisan, the following Wednesday would be the fourteenth, when as the day neared its close the paschal lamb must be slain, that it might be eaten that night, the night part of the fifteenth of Nisan, or Thursday. Now it is repeatedly represented

that the Scriptures required that the Son of man should rise from the grave on the third day. In Matt. 12:39 Jesus explains that the burial of Jonah in the body of the fish was a sign of His lying in the grave. In Jonah 1:17 we read that "Jonah was in the belly of the fish *three days and three nights.*" And Jesus says in Matt. 12:40: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be *three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*" This clearly requires three full days and three full nights as the length of time Christ must lie in the grave.

The narrative shows that the body of Jesus could barely be entombed by sunset on Wednesday. See John 19:31, 41, 42. This would make the rising of Jesus due after sunset on Saturday following. Let us now compare with this the various data given by the four Gospels.

John 21:1: "The first day of the week [beginning at sunset of our Saturday] cometh Mary Magdalene *early, when it was yet dark,* unto the sepulchre." This language is quite different from Mark 16:1, 2: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun." Note the difference in regard to the time and the company. This is evidently the same incident as that given in Luke 24:1, 10: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they ["the women—which came with him from Galilee," 23:55] came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre." Very different, however, from these last two records is that found in Matt. 27:61 and 28:1, 2: "and there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre [as they entombed the body of Jesus].....In the end of

the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Note certain expressions here. "In the end of the Sabbath" would mean at sunset on Saturday. "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" must be understood as the equivalent of the preceding description. The word "day" stands in italics, showing that it is not in the original. "As it began to dawn towards the first of the week," then, exactly harmonizes with the description, "In the end of the Sabbath," if only we understand that the word "dawn" has no reference to light, but only to beginning, "dawn" being used figuratively. The two descriptions would be thrown together thus: "In the end of the Sabbath, at the first beginning of the week"; that is, just at the exact turn of the Jewish week.

The order of events seems, then, to have been about as follows: When Jesus was being hastily buried in a tomb right at hand to where He was crucified, the two Marys were sitting over against the place in close observation (Matt. 27:61). They seem to have had a deep impression leading them to return after exactly three days and three nights "*to see the sepulchre.*" An earthquake just then occurred, produced by the descent of the angel of the Lord to open the tomb. The keepers were struck as if dead with terror and the women needed quieting assurance from the angel, who told them that Jesus was risen, showed them the empty tomb and bade them report to the disciples. On their way Jesus disclosed Himself to them. While they then hastened on some of the watchers were also fleeing into the city to report what had taken place. The report of the two Marys was not believed by anybody (Mark 16:11). Even the other women did not believe, but went on preparing their

spices and came at sunrise, the two Marys accompanying them, to anoint the body of Jesus (Mark 16: 1, 2 and Luke 24: 1-10). This larger company, finding the stone rolled away and the tomb empty, entered into the tomb, were affrighted by suddenly meeting there the angel, who charged them to go and tell the "disciples, and Peter." "They returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.....And *their* words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed *them* not" (Luke 24: 9, 11). It was then only that Peter and John ran to the tomb to investigate. John was convinced by the investigation (John 20: 8), while Peter "departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass" (Luke 24: 12). John explains, "For as yet they *knew not the Scripture*, that He must rise again from the dead" (20: 9).

It must be now clear to a candid reader that utmost care was taken, especially by John, to show that all the requirements of Old Testament types and prophecies were exactly fulfilled so far as the data connected with the anointing, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus were concerned.

CHAPTER III.

JESUS' OWN TEACHING, CONTINUED.

HIS IMPENDING DEPARTURE.

WE WILL now take up the direct progress of John's Gospel again, beginning with Chapter 13, to show how fixedly Jesus kept His own purpose upon the objective of His advent and sought to center the minds of His disciples upon the same. Nearly one-fifth of the whole book (Chapters 13-17) is given to the last hours spent by Jesus alone with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion. The impending death of Jesus and His departure to the Father constituted the standpoint of this entire section.

"Now before the feast of passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should *depart out of the world unto the Father*" (13:1). "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (v. 3). "Whither I go, ye cannot come" (v. 33). "I go to prepare a place for you" (14:2). "I go unto the Father" (v. 12). "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more" (v. 19). "I go away" (v. 28). "Now I go my way to him that sent me" (16:5). "It is expedient for you that I go away:.....if I go not away.....but if I depart" (v. 7). "A little while, and ye shall not see me" (v. 16). "I leave the world, and go to the Father" (v. 28). "Father, the hour is come,.....I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.....And now I come unto thee" (17:1, 4, 13).

The effect upon the Apostles, of the way in which Jesus opened His heart and revealed to them in this precious farewell interview of teaching and intercession,

was voiced by them in the word: "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (16:30). And here again, Jesus referred them for authentication of the things of which He was apprising them to the Old Testament writings. "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" (13:18). "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (15:25).

But while this section of John's Gospel is so preoccupied immediately with Jesus' impending death and departure to the Father, yet all that has a further objective, which constitutes, we may almost say, the governing consideration of the whole passage, especially of Chapters 14 and 16; and that objective is that fifth and crowning one of the group of five culminating events of Christ's first advent; namely, the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. On this subject John is far richer and fuller than the Synoptists.

Through that pregnant passage of the book (7:39), we learned that a new outstanding gift of the Spirit waited for the glorification of Jesus. In the chapters now under consideration, where immediate thought is fixed upon Jesus' death and departure to the Father, this departure is presented in its immediate objective upon the exaltation of Jesus to the previous glory of the Son of God with the Father. "Now is the *Son of man glorified*, and God is glorified *in him* [the Son of man]. If God be glorified in him [the *Son of man*, by his fulfilling unto death the will of God], God shall glorify him [the Son of man] in himself, and shall *straightway* glorify him [*the Son of man*]" (13:31, 32). "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son [as *Son of man*], that thy Son [as *Son of man*] may glorify thee:.....I have

glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me [as Son of man] with the glory which I [as Christ, the Son of God] had with thee before the world was" (17:1, 5).

But this wondrous glorification of the Christ as Son of man with the eternal glory, which as Son of God He had enjoyed with the Father as His equal in form as well as nature, had as the further objective the sending of the Comforter. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (16:7). We are thus brought face to face with the fact that the crowning objective of Jesus Christ's first advent was, at the proper time, to make a new gift of the Holy Spirit here below. Of the superior advantages of this new gift of the Holy Spirit we are not left in ignorance by these chapters. Jesus projects these superior advantages on the two lines of the superior personal benefit to His disciples and of their superior ministry, although He found it practically impossible at the time to kindle in them any hearty response to His words about leaving them. He tried to comfort them by saying, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." And He tried to fire their zeal by the assurance with respect to service: "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do [shall then be doing] shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; *because I go unto my Father*" (14:2, 3, 12).

ADVANTAGES FROM HIS GOING TO THE FATHER.

Let us now examine the Master's direct teachings regarding the great benefits to be obtained by the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (14:15-17).

This teaches that the disciples already knew the Holy Spirit in person and in presence, both by their own experience and, probably, very especially as He was manifest to them in and through Jesus. But the passage also shows that in the coming gift they should know and experience the Spirit in a new meaning, and especially so inwardly and unceasingly. It cannot be that Jesus was meaning to make the distinction that up to Pentecost the Spirit had been only with believers, but was thereafter to be in them. This position is plainly refuted by all Scripture record. The present tense expression, "he dwelleth with you," is pointing forward to the coming days, just as the present tense in the expressions, "ye see me" and "because I live," in verse 19 does.

The fact is, that the Son of God Himself had come by incarnation into peculiar new intimacy with and reality to believers, and a like advance is here promised by Him with respect to the coming relationship of the Holy Spirit, such advance as gave occasion for attaching to Him the new name of Comforter. This new dispensation of the Spirit as Comforter, it is further shown in the passage, was to furnish to believers a new dispensation of spiritual enjoyment and realization of the inward presence and manifestation of the Father and of the Son. "At that day [of the Comforter's coming] ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. . . . I will manifest myself. . . . If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (vs. 20, 21, 23). Jesus had just been dealing with His disciples

regarding these realities (vs. 7-11), complaining of their lack of understanding; and He has occasion to complain today of our lack of understanding these familiar spiritual verities. But the Comforter was to make these mysteries real to the Apostles, and He it is that must do the same for us.

Jesus assured His Apostles of a further personal advantage to them from His departing to the Father, from thence to give them the Spirit. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (14:26). Jesus' teachings while with His followers were necessarily very incomplete, and they were even then very poorly understood by them and would easily have been lost by them altogether. But the gift of the Comforter remedied this; He was to fill out, unfold and impress lastingly the truth of Jesus Christ. A very striking illustration of this benefit is furnished by John's remark in 12:16 in connection with the occurrences of Palm Sabbath: "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus *was glorified* [and sent the Comforter], then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him" (just as the Old Testament prophecies had foreshown).

Another very important body of teaching respecting the advantage in Jesus' departure and in the coming of the Comforter in His room begins with 15:26, 27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Every word here is weighty. First, the mystery of the trinity is wonderfully disclosed. Here we are dealing with infinities, incomprehensible to us, and yet expressed

by Jesus in simple human language. The Holy Spirit "proceedeth from the Father" and is sent by the Son. It is present tense of continuous action. It seems that the Spirit is ever going forth from the Father as His Spirit and embodying the Father in all fulness in the Son as His perfect image and manifestation. This is true not only in Christ's eternal deity, but also now in His humanity. Even in His humiliation Jesus could say "I and the Father are one," and "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and it is especially true now that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Now, it is only through the Son that the Spirit further proceedeth unto the believer: "The Comforterwhom *I will send unto you from the Father.*" How evident it is that the special bestowment of the Holy Spirit, which John the Baptist and Jesus both announced, was dependent upon Christ's return to the Father in His humanity to be glorified bodily and for evermore! "*Whom I will send unto you from the Father.*"

Then, Jesus says, "He shall testify of me." It requires the Holy Spirit to bear effectual witness, truly to reveal, in the matter of knowing "Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." "And ye also shall bear witness [testify of me], because ye have been with me from the beginning." Although the disciples had been eye-witnesses from the beginning, yet they needed this gift of the Spirit from the glorified Jesus to be truly and fully enlightened themselves on Jesus, His words and His works, so as to be the mighty witnesses that they were. Indeed, not until Jesus was glorified, as has been said, was the full revelation which the Father had to make through His incarnate Son possible. While the apprehension of the Apostles in the things taught them by Jesus regarding Himself was so disappointing, yet this was remedied through the coming of the Comforter as the Spirit of their glorified Master. Then they

better comprehended the things shown to them while He was with them, as well as the things belonging to His glorified state and ministry.

Further, most important teaching is given by our Lord in 16:7-15:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove [convict] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

Here Jesus gives assurance that powerful conviction shall fall upon the world through the truth,—conviction of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment—after the rejection of Jesus, His ascension to glory, and after the judgment of the cross shall have overtaken the prince of this world. Jesus here plainly declares the very great incompleteness of His communications to the disciples while yet with them, because of their inability as yet to receive them. This was to be remedied by the new order; the Spirit was to lead them into all truth. Anticipating the disciples' concern over a change of teachers, Jesus told them that the Comforter would not be a different and independent teacher, but that, just as Jesus Himself had told them only what He received of the Father, so the Comforter should be the teacher for Jesus, speaking only what He first heard from Him and only glorifying Him. And it is very important, in connection with the question of new and distinctive apostolical prophecy, to note that Jesus said that the Spirit should show them "things to come."

How strongly all this corroborates the position already pointed out, that the program of Jesus from the beginning of His first advent and ministry contemplated nothing short of an entire new dispensation to intervene before He should appear in the earth as the King! His interview with Pilate regarding this point is very pertinent. Jesus so plainly acknowledged to Pilate that He was the King of the Jews, that Pilate from that point right through called Him the King of the Jews. Yet Jesus also said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world [that is, obtained from worldly hands]; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king [the strongest form of affirmation]. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (not that I should as yet actually take the throne) (John 18:36, 37). Jesus here teaches that His kingdom is vested in Him from a higher source than the human and earthly; and that the Father had not yet vested the kingdom in Him as Son of man. Not until His ascension was the Scripture fulfilled: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I [says Jesus glorified] will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; *this day* have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:6, 7). From Heb. 1:3-5 it is made evident that the passage just quoted refers to the Father's adopting decree upon the ascension of Jesus.

In continuing the account of Jesus' passion, John notes other fulfillments of Scripture. "That the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did" (19:24). "After this, Jesus, *knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled*, saith,

I thirst" (v. 28). "For these things were done that the *Scripture should be fulfilled*, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they have pierced" (vs. 36, 37).

LUKE'S POST-RESURRECTION ADDITIONS.

Finally, from Luke we have extended and most conclusive teaching given by Jesus after His resurrection, to show that, not to take the throne, but to fulfil the prior program of His death, burial, resurrection, glorification and world-wide evangelization under the Pentecostal power of the Holy Ghost, did He then come into the world, and that this is what all Old Testament teaching foreshowed and required.

We have already noted John's record that, up to the time of the arrival of himself and Peter at the empty tomb, "as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (20:9). John himself was convinced on the spot (v. 8), but apparently Peter was not freed from wonderment of mind until the Lord vouchsafed to him a special appearing. See 1 Cor. 15:5 compared with Luke 24:34.

On the resurrection day Jesus joined Himself to Cleopas and another disciple on their way to Emmaus, about ten miles from Jerusalem. They were perplexedly talking over the occurrences of the past few days, and especially the amazing reports of that very morning. To Jesus' inquiry regarding the matters of their conversation, they expressed surprise that He should be such a stranger at Jerusalem as to be ignorant of what had been publicly transpiring. To His question, "What things?" they replied first with a recital of the tragedy which had befallen Him of whom they had "trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." They continued with bewildered accounts of the unbelievable reports of those—the women and certain others (Peter and John) of their company—who on that

significant "third day" had visited the sepulchre of Jesus and reported it empty, and that angels had appeared to declare that Jesus was alive. Then this supposed stranger took the matter up in a way to show how that only blamable blindness to the Scriptures could account for any one's then or now looking for anything else to occur than just those culminating events of Christ's first advent. "*Ought not* [the] Christ [Messiah] to have *suffered these things*, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets [an expression covering the whole Old Testament], he expounded unto them in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself" (24:26, 27). Later, in accepting their indoor hospitality, while Jesus blessed and brake bread and gave to them, their eyes were opened to know Him, only to see Him mysteriously vanish from their sight. Their reflections one with another concerned the marvelous heart-burning which Jesus' elucidation of Scripture gave them. Upon returning hurriedly to Jerusalem with the wondrous tale, they were first confronted with an excited crowd of disciples thrilled with the "saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon," the first one of the Apostles to see the Lord. After the two had added their testimony, "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." With great difficulty Jesus convinced and calmed the company. Then He referred them again to the abundant and consistent testimony of Moses, prophets and Psalms to these very things that had been fulfilled, which testimony also, He reminded them, He had before faithfully, although vainly, impressed upon them.

Luke's account then continues with the most comprehensive statement left to us of the Scriptural scope of the objects of the first advent (24:45-48): "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the

Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved [the] Christ [Messiah] to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his [Jesus'] name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." Here is compassed death (and burial), resurrection the third day (and ascension into glory), and world-wide evangelization (throughout an indefinite dispensation till His return). He opened their understanding to perceive *all this in the Old Testament* and appointed them as both eye-witnesses and as Scriptural expounders of all these things. How can there be any question as to the understanding which Jesus Himself all along had as to the immediate objects of His first advent, as those objects were made plain to Him out of the Old Testament Scriptures, or as to the understanding which He always sought to give to others? Yet we see by the record how a contrary understanding obtruded itself and persisted to the end even on the part of His closest followers.

Having opened the understanding of the disciples, Jesus yet commanded them not to take up their commission, until they should at Jerusalem receive the necessary power of the Spirit for it.

What we have just had brought before us probably embraces what featured the interviews of Jesus with the Apostles and the disciples after His resurrection until His ascension. Still, at the very last hour the question of the eleven Apostles was, "Lord, wilt thou at *this time* [now at last] restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus replied in a way again and finally to turn their thought from any immediate restoration of the kingdom, and to turn their thought to the remainder of the immediate program contemplated in His first advent, including a whole dispensation of world-wide evangelization. Then upon His ascension before their eyes, the angels sought to detach their minds wholly

from the visible order of things in Jesus Christ for an indefinite time until He should in like manner visibly return from heaven to earth.

All this slowness to understand and to believe, all this persistent suggestion to Jesus to restore the kingdom then and there, brings out on a strong background the more strikingly the entire change of standpoint from which the Apostles bore witness to Jesus after the Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost. This shows us how deeply significant was the relation of the glorification of Jesus to the great gift of Pentecost, and also how marvellous was the effect of that gift upon Apostles and disciples. We are the better prepared now to observe how keenly the Apostles in all their after ministry realized the new dispensational standpoint they were occupying, and how definite and distinct is the basis of Gospel faith and service throughout this dispensation, and also how significant is the prophetic message for this whole age.

CHAPTER IV.

TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES. THE ACTS, I.

IN PASSING from the teaching of Jesus, which has been traced clear up to the time of His ascension, to the actual preaching of the Apostles after the glorification of Jesus had occurred,—as attested to, and made the new standpoint of divine dealings with man, by the Pentecostal coming of the Holy Ghost—the most striking further evidence is met with that the prophetic outlook had come to stand upon a new and more advanced position.

This position constitutes the relationship which the Book of the Acts sustains to the organic structure of all the Bible; for, the Acts presents the practical activities of the Apostles as founded upon the group of new dispensational events which the Old Testament demanded should mark the Messiah's first advent; the Acts projects those activities from the basis of the presence of Jesus glorified as Christ the Lord at the Father's right hand above; the Acts credits all direction and power of the apostolical operations to the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost; the Acts presents the sphere of action as world-wide, and as irrespective of race or religion; and the Acts presents the dispensational progress as directly preparatory to the return of Jesus Christ in His present glory to restore the kingdom to Israel, just as is demanded by all Old Testament prediction and by the assurances given by Jesus Himself before His death and resurrection. These factors furnish the material for a new and protracted dispensation not hitherto equalled, a dispensation such as warranted the intense interest in it shown by Old Testament prophecy, the zeal with which Jesus moved forward to it even by way of the

cross and the tomb, and the abandonment with which the Apostles and the early believers committed themselves to the new trust and to the new opportunity. It may probably be said with justice that the most important concern for the Church today is to understand and to have full faith to embrace the legacy of this trust and of this opportunity as handed down from the early Church to each succeeding generation till Jesus returns.

We are now to look through the record of the evangelistic activities of the apostolical Church, in order to note how keenly alive were the Apostles and the believers of that day to an appointment to a new testimony, under a new enduement of power, to a new field of evangelism, and that with a new objective in ultimate view. That testimony was the message of an incarnate Christ, crucified, buried, risen, ascended, glorified; that enduement was the life and energy of the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, whose name was exalted above all creation; the new field of evangelism was the whole world with Jerusalem as the center,—a centrifugal center, however, not the centripetal; and the new objective was that coming of the Son of God, which was always in ultimate view in prophecy, but which now focussed on the glorified Jesus,—of Nazareth, of the cross, and of the tomb opened to receive Him, and opened to release Him.

1. PETER'S PENTECOSTAL ADDRESS, ACTS 2:14-39.

This discourse is orderly and logical, and it consists of three successive parts.

(1) Peter's Scriptural explanation of the nature of the amazing phenomenon of the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost (vs. 14-21):

“14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by

the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Peter did not say that the outpouring of the Spirit predicted by Joel was fulfilled on that day; it was the similarity of phenomena (while still great difference) and of effect (the saving of penitents, v. 21) between Joel's description and what was that day being witnessed in Jerusalem, which identified the Pentecostal phenomenon as of the very same Spirit that Joel spoke of, and which freed it from all suggestion of its being due to wine. We here learn incidentally that it need not surprise any one if the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost should cause the recipient to excite wonder and perplexity in beholders, or even to provoke from them the mocking explanation, "These men are full of new wine."

(2) Peter's Scriptural explanation of the source and secret of this unique visitation of the Holy Spirit (vs. 22-36):

"22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. 25 For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast

made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would *raise up* Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before *spake* of the *resurrection* of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God *raised up*, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

It is to be emphasized that Peter accounts for this occurrence wholly by the Old Testament Scriptures and the teaching of Jesus. This explanation of the matter reveals at once how clearly the Old Testament foreshows the things of Jesus,—when one’s eyes are opened to perceive it—and how plainly the Apostles, after their understanding had been opened by the risen Jesus and anointed by the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, saw these things predicted by the Old Testament, and were able to drive home the conviction of them upon their hearers by the power of the Holy Spirit. In this paragraph Peter traces a man named Jesus of Nazareth through well-known divine wonders recently wrought by Him publicly; through His divinely ordained accursed death at the hands of Peter’s very hearers; through His well-accredited resurrection by God’s power just according to familiar prophecy from David’s mouth; and through His miraculous ascension to His exaltation at God’s right hand as both Lord and Christ,—this last now being attested by the coming from Him, according to the Father’s promise, of just such a gift and demonstration of the

Holy Spirit of glory and of power as was there before all eyes.

The reader's attention is called to the clear unfolding by Peter from Ps. 16 of a prediction by David, more than a thousand years before, of the resurrection of the incarnate Christ as David's Lord. And it is here brought out that the phrase, "raise up," found in 1 Chron. 17: 11,—where God promises David to raise up of his sons one to sit forever upon his throne—should be taken to mean resurrect; so that David understood God's covenant with him to mean, that the final inheritor and perpetuator of his throne was to be the Christ born of his loins and resurrected from (atoning) death. This shows that Jesus was not entitled to the throne of David before or without resurrection. He was not authorized to look throneward, or to allow anyone else to do so, excepting through and beyond the cross and the tomb, beyond resurrection and return on high to be glorified as Son of man in the fulness of the Godhead.

(3) Peter's Scriptural application of the Pentecostal giving of the Holy Spirit, to the intended purpose of the salvation of his hearers and of their receiving the same gift of the Holy Spirit (vs. 37-39):

"37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Baptism is not here first instituted, but it is now identified with the name of Jesus as the second person of the trinity. Remission of sins is now made known as obtained through Jesus as the Christ. The gift of the Holy Ghost will be bestowed upon none who do not acknowledge Jesus as Christ, the Son of God; but it

will be freely given to all who believe in and receive Him from the glorified Jesus, even "to all that are afar off," as far off in distance of space and of time as we ourselves are.

2. PETER'S SECOND POPULAR ADDRESS, 3:12-26.

Here is another impromptu address given by Peter to the populace in the temple precincts. It shows the wonderful working of the Pentecostal Spirit, in first creating a critical situation, and then in holding command of the situation through Christ's servants for practical spiritual results.

Jesus had told His disciples before leaving them, that He would work by them, from the Father's presence above, the same and even greater works than while visibly present with them. And the Book of the Acts opens with reference to the things which Jesus while visibly present "began to do and teach," implying that He had gone to the Father only to continue the same on a greater scale. On the present occasion a very marvellous miracle had been openly wrought by Peter and John, which naturally attracted excited popular attention to them as though by their "own power or holiness" they had done this. Let Peter himself speak to the situation:

"12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. 14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 16 And his name, through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

Peter accounts for the miracle altogether through the fact that God, the God of Israel, had "glorified his Son Jesus," whom these very auditors of Peter had participated in denying and killing, although He was the Prince of life. But Him had God "raised from the dead," of which fact Peter and John were witnesses. Peter explains that the name of God's "Son Jesus" was the same for miracles that His visible presence had been before, faith in Him for this now taking the place of former sight.

It appears in vs. 19-26 that Peter's main aim was the same on this occasion as on the former one; namely, to convict, in order to save, his hearers:

"19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. 22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

This passage presents certain points of important teaching for our present purposes. (1) The Lord is again to appear visibly on the earth to bless the penitent and to restore all things in Israel according to the predictions of the "holy prophets since the world began." (2) This second coming of Christ is vouched for by the exact fulfilment in the first coming of all predicted there-

of by Moses, Samuel and all the prophets following him. (3) The immediate proffers of blessing to Israel made by Jesus before and following His resurrection anticipated the world-wide evangelization referred to in the Abrahamic covenant by the promise, "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."

How clearly it appears again that the Old Testament abounds throughout with literal prediction of all that met the incarnate Christ in His first advent, and that when here He could have been looking and pointing to nothing else than just what befell Him!

3. PETER'S FIRST ADDRESS BEFORE THE JEWISH OFFICIALS, 4: 8-12

This address sprang from the same occasion as the former one did. Such was being the popular saving effect in Jerusalem as the Apostles "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead," that the religious authorities were stirred to forcible opposition. The Apostles were thrown into prison over night, after which they were brought before an imposing assemblage of Jewish rulers to answer to the challenge, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?"

"8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

It was by the Holy Ghost that Peter was equal to this serious emergency, to this grand opportunity. Bold was his answer to the rulers and people, that by the

name (the same as the very person unseen) of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified by these very auditors but resurrected by God, that well-known cripple stood before them whole. Again the facts are carried back to well-known Old Testament prediction, and all salvation is ascribed now to the Son of God under the name of Jesus, the Christ.

The rulers were in a predicament. Here stood a man "above forty years old," on whom "a notable miracle" had been wrought by "unlearned and ignorant men," who, the rulers learned, "had been with Jesus," and who declared fearlessly and with good evidence that by Him—in name, although not now in sight—this deed had been wrought. Their command, "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus," only brought forth the answer from the Apostles that they were subject to higher, and contrary, command in the matter. No resort was left the Jews but cowardly threats, inasmuch as, out of deference to popular sentiment, they felt obliged to let the Apostles go.

The Apostles returned to the company of the believers. So far from taking timid counsel together, as they lifted up their voices in prayer to the Lord God, the creator of all things, they waxed bold in spirit: as they were led out by the Holy Spirit to see from the second Psalm, how that the rage of the Gentiles and of the Jews, of the kings of the earth and of the rulers of Israel, as fulfilled in the murder of Jesus Christ, had only accomplished what had been by divine "counsel determined before to be done," they triumphantly prayed the Lord God further to embolden their public testimony, by stretching forth His hand to heal, "and that signs and wonders may be done by the name," said they, "of thy holy child Jesus." In response, the place of assembly was shaken as by an earthquake, and a greater Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit came upon them, so that they testified with great power to the res-

urrection of the Lord Jesus, and new displays of grace broke forth upon the company of believers.

In connection with this prayer of the intrepid Apostles and believers, and with the results following, one can scarcely refrain from expressing the conviction, that little of the old-time "power" will attend the Church which substitutes for prayer to God to back up bold preaching by miraculous healings, an assiduous promotion of mere "medical science." The latter is the world's best reliance; but higher healing evidences belong to the "witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" "with great power." And, by the way, does not this study of the Acts reveal a striking contrast between preaching then and today as regards the prominence of the theme of the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Of course, the very recent occurrence of the death and resurrection of Jesus, coupled with the previous persistent failure of the Apostles to expect any such thing, may be urged as accounting for the vivid and inspiring impression produced upon their minds by these events. But, it is noteworthy that the events of themselves did not suffice to inspire and to qualify them to preach as they did; it was the revelation to them of the crucified, risen and ascended Jesus, right out of glory by the Holy Ghost, that seemed first to make these events mighty to them and something which they could not but preach. Is it true that since the days of the Apostles the days of preaching these events are past, as well as "the days of miracles," as is commonly claimed? Or is it not possible, that it is merely a question of being willing to receive the Holy Ghost in a way to preach, to pray and to practice as did the early Church?

4. PETER'S SECOND DEFENSE, 5:26-33

The narrative digressed from the main line, to recount the movement among the believers at Jerusalem to hold "all things common" and the story of Ananias and

Sapphira. At 5:12 the main thread of the narrative is resumed, and the vast expansion of the apostolical ministry, both as respects miracles of power and the salvation of souls, is briefly summarized. The result was a furious onslaught from the ecclesiastical heads and a second imprisonment of the Apostles. The angel of the Lord, however, opened the prison doors supernaturally, brought the Apostles forth and bade them to preach to the people most publicly "all the words of this life." When the Sanhedrin assembled in the morning to try the Apostles, it was found that the prison was empty and that the Apostles were preaching in the temple.

"26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. 27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. 33 And when they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."

The gist of the apostolic message is in this instance again the same as heretofore. It is the resurrection of Jesus, whom the auditors had joined in slaying, by the hand of the God of their fathers: it is the exaltation of the same Jesus in glory above to be from thence a Prince and a Saviour to Israel that had crucified Him; it is the demonstration of all this by the works of the Holy Ghost which none could dispute. Peter's object, as it is to be implied, is again the same,—that his hearers might repent, be forgiven, and receive the Holy Ghost

to obey Him themselves. The result is again the same so far as the rulers are concerned,—they resist the Holy Ghost all the more obdurately and murderously.

5. THE FIRST MARTYR'S TESTIMONY, 7:54-60

As Stephen rehearsed the long and fascinating history of Israel he perceived that he would be cut short of his climax, if he proceeded regularly from the symbolical revelation of the Son of God in the temple of Solomon to His promised revelation in human body as found in Jesus of Nazareth. So Stephen suddenly turned upon the rulers a powerful convicting charge, that, as the fathers withstood the Holy Ghost by persecuting those who prophesied the coming of the Just One, so they had likewise persistently withstood the Holy Ghost in betraying and murdering Him.

“54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and *Jesus* standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heaven opened, and the *Son of man* standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord *Jesus*, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”

Here again, it was—“*Jesus* standing on the right hand of God,” it was “Lord *Jesus*, receive my spirit,” it was “Lord (*Jesus*), lay not this sin to their charge”—that was the wire conducting successive shocks of the Holy Ghost to the hearts of those murderers of Stephen.

6. PHILIP'S TESTIMONY TO THE EUNUCH, 8:30-39

Philip, one of the deacons at Jerusalem, journeyed to Samaria, in consequence of the scattering of the

Church from Jerusalem, and there he was given a most remarkable ministry of salvation and healing. This work was soon followed up by the Apostles Peter and John in the further ministry of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Meantime, Philip was sent by the Holy Ghost "toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza." This brought to Philip's notice a distinguished official of Candace—the queen of the Ethiopians—who was just returning from a trip to worship at Jerusalem, and who was engaged in his chariot reading the prophecy of Isaiah at the fifty-third chapter. Philip was directed by the Spirit to join company with this distinguished traveler.

"30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man guide me. And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 32 The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus*. 36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

Philip evidently preached to the eunuch from the Isaiah passage the fulfilment in Jesus of the entire outline of Christ's incarnation, atoning death, burial, resurrection and glorification as constituting now the content of saving faith. It was in this faith that the

eunuch was baptized; and most probably he returned to the Ethiopian court, to a great ruler and nation, as a most ardent and influential confessor of the Gospel of the crucified and glorified Jesus.

7. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS, 9:3-7, 15-22

"3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am *Jesus* whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man."

It was not merely the divine glory shining out of heaven upon him, which convicted Saul; but it was that glory as identified with Jesus that slew the persecutor.

And after three days the Lord directed Ananias to go to Saul, who was sitting sightless and in prayer, and who had in a vision seen "a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." In fear of Saul, the well-known persecutor, Ananias demurred.

"15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hand on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even *Jesus*, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

Again, it was here "the Lord, even *Jesus*," that constituted the peculiar standpoint for both Ananias and Saul.

"19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20 And straightway he preached Christ in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

A careful reader would know for himself that it could not be that Saul preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God, but Jesus. And this is the true reading, as the Revised Version shows. No Jew needed to be taught that Christ (preincarnate) was the Son of God; but the great new standpoint of all Gospel preaching was that Jesus (now unseen in the glory) is that Christ, the very Son of God.

"21 But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on *this name* in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? 22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this (*Jesus*) is very Christ."

8 PETER'S SERMON TO THE GENTILES IN CAESAREA, 10:34-48

Here is a new and momentous stage of advance in the new dispensation. Peter had lost from his eyes the scales of blindness regarding the things of Jesus as the Christ in His advent of humiliation, sacrifice and return to glory. Peter was under the enduement of the Spirit of the glorified Son of man; but he still had upon his eyes the old Jewish scales regarding the spiritual status of the Gentiles. These scales were removed by a remarkable vision and the Spirit's interpretation of the same, to the effect that he "should not call any man common or unclean." Hence Peter was prepared to respond to the call of Cornelius to come from Joppa to Caesarea to tell the latter what he ought to do. Upon

his arrival, Peter found Cornelius awaiting him, with his kinsmen and near friends.

"34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all:) 36 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name WHOSOEVER believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 44 While Peter yet spake these words [*whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*], the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," or "of Jesus Christ,"

as reads the Revised Version.

Peter not only freely went among the Gentiles for the first time on this occasion, but he gave them the same comprehensive doctrine of Jesus as the glorified Christ and Son of man that had been preached among the Jews. The climax of Peter's discourse was reached in emphasizing that word "*whosoever*," in verse 43. This was the one further word which these pious Gentiles needed to hear, in order to come right into all Gospel

privileges, which Jews and Gentiles alike had long believed belonged in a superior, if not exclusive, way to the Jews alone. This let Cornelius and the rest right in under the effusion of the Holy Ghost from the glorified Jesus after the original Pentecostal manner.

9 EXTENSION AMONG THE GENTILES, 11:19-21

“19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto Jews only. 20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.”

Notice that what was spoken at Antioch is summed up as “preaching the Lord *Jesus*.” The survey of Acts thus far shows that this expression aptly sums up the whole apostolic preaching; it makes a distinctive dispensational message, and it is, therefore, the sum of all true Gospel preaching for this present day. This phrase, “the Lord Jesus,” embodies the Gospel of the incarnate Son of God until He comes again in His glory.

CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES CONTINUED. THE ACTS, II.

10 PAUL'S PREACHING TO JEWS AND GENTILES AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA, 13: 23-41.

THUS far the Acts has given us samples of apostolic preaching as represented mostly by Peter; from this point the representative is almost exclusively the Apostle Paul. In neither instance does the representative stand alone, but he is the spokesman for others in association with him; hence we have a full reflection of the Gospel preaching and teaching in the apostolical Church.

Paul was sent forth from Antioch first about ten years after Pentecost. Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch in Pisidia, where they found their first place of hearing in the synagogue. Very appropriately Paul began his sermon with a sketch of the history of Israel, and he had just mentioned God's choice of David as the king of Israel.

"23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: 24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose. 26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. 27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. 28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. 29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a

sepulchre. 30 But God raised him from the dead: 31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. 32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, 33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. 35 Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."

Thus Paul, by a full résumé of the facts belonging to Christ's first advent, as required by all Hebrew prophecy and as constituting the new dispensational standpoint, laid the ground for a heart-searching application to his audience.

"38 Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; 41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

The effect of this discourse was tremendous. "Many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas" for further instruction, while the Gentiles clamored for a repetition of the address the next Sabbath. The great interest displayed on the second Sabbath by the Gentiles filled the impenitent Jews with envy and goaded them to vehement opposition. On this account Paul turned specially to the Gentiles on the authority of the prophecy of Isaiah, "I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." This rejoiced the Gentiles, many believed, "and the word of the Lord

was published throughout all the region." Opposition increased to a degree of intensity that finally expelled the Apostles from those regions. But disciples were left behind, "filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost." Our main use of this long account is, however, to note the added proof that, according to all Old Testament prediction, the immediate advent of Christ in the world was solely with view to death, burial, resurrection and return as the Son of man to former glory, these facts to constitute the message of a new dispensation of worldwide evangelism in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down anew from heaven.

11 THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL, 15:6-18.

The preaching of Paul, embracing so largely Gentile evangelism, first brought about the decisive clash between the new dispensational message and the legalistic adherence to the Mosaic ordinances maintained by the prevailing Judaism. This Judaistic position was expressed in the formula, "That it was needful to circumcise them (Gentile converts), and to command them to keep the law of Moses."

"6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter. 7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the *grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* we shall be saved, even as they. 12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the

Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

This passage is unique in presenting the fact that a new dispensation is present, which must run its course before the restoration of the kingdom of Israel can be expected; and that this order exactly tallies with Old Testament prophecy. Certain features of this dispensation are already familiar to us. While the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus are not here mentioned, yet the standpoint here given of this dispensation is that of "the grace of the Lord (the glorified) Jesus Christ" and of the gift of the Holy Spirit from Him. The feature, however, that is most emphasized is that of the diffusion of this Gospel among all the Gentiles for a new dispensational gathering of believers from all the world without distinction of Jew or Gentile; it is a dispensation of world-wide outgathering of "a people for His name," while Israel is being sifted among all nations, being wholly disintegrated and useless as the vehicle of divine working in the earth. How plain it is, that nothing about an immediate kingdom could be even mooted in the days of John the Baptist, of Jesus Himself, of the Apostles, or of the present time, without flagrantly violating the Old Testament prophecies!

12 INCIDENTAL CASES.

At Philippi the Apostles were annoyed by a damsel who had an evil "spirit of divination," who affected to advertise the Apostles. "And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come

out of her. And he came out the same hour" (16:18). It was in the name of the unseen, but living, glorified and spiritually present "Jesus Christ" that Paul exorcised the demon, even as Jesus before ascending had promised His disciples should be done.

In the same city and as a consequence of casting out the demon the Apostles were put into stocks in the inner cage of the city prison. At midnight, as they prayed and praised God, a great earthquake shook everything and everybody loose. When the terrified and convicted keeper piteously inquired the way of salvation, the Apostles answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (16:31). The phrase "the Lord *Jesus* Christ," comprehends all that has been so often brought out as to the standpoint of the new dispensation.

13 PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND BEREA, 17:1-12.

"1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 Whom Jason hath received: These all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. 10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that

they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

This passage finely illustrates the new manner of preaching to the Jews the old Gospel of Christ the Saviour,—it is now preached in the name of the crucified, resurrected, ascended and glorified Jesus, answering perfectly to the predictions of the Hebrew prophets. All allegations regarding Jesus were submitted to the most searching demands of Old Testament writings. Paul had time to do this thoroughly with the Jews at Thessalonica, although their prejudices drove them to such unreasonable and outrageous opposition. At Berea, Paul apparently did not have sufficient time to conduct a searching of Scripture so thoroughly; so the Bereans did this for themselves. Being noble minded and not prejudiced, the Bereans came out nicely into the light of Jesus. How clearly this shows that the Old Testament Scriptures are readily intelligible to the common mind, to the common reader, and that anyone can satisfy himself by the criterion of Old Testament prognosis that Jesus is the incarnation of the eternal Christ and Son of God! The charge that the Apostles preached "another king, one Jesus," implies the preaching of the second coming of Christ very prominently at Thessalonica. And we find this clearly reflected in the Epistles to the Thessalonians.

14 PAUL'S MINISTRY IN CORINTH, 18:4-6.

"4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. 5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ [or 'is the Christ']. 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

Again Paul's preaching at Corinth was "as his manner was,"—seeking to fix the faith in Christ upon Jesus as that Christ incarnate.

15 APOLLOS IN ACHAIA, 18:24-28.

"24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (or "is the Christ").

When Apollos had been brought into the further dispensational light, he no longer preached "the way of the Lord" as One about to appear, but "he mightily [in the power of the Pentecostal Spirit] convinced the Jews, and that publicly, *showing by the Scriptures* [of the Old Testament], that Jesus was [the] Christ."

16 PAUL IN EPHEBUS, 19:1-7.

"1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve."

This is most important. These disciples, having only been baptized by John the Baptist, had not so much as heard—not that the Holy Ghost was to be had, for Old Testament believers knew and had the Holy Ghost, but—that the gift of the Holy Ghost through the glorified incarnate Christ, as John the Baptist had predicted, and as Old Testament prophecy, both in Mosaic types and in direct predictions of the prophets, had promised, was yet on hand. When Paul brought up their understanding to the existing standpoint of the fulfilled Pentecost, they readily received baptism in the name of the glorified Son of man and were forthwith prepared to receive the new dispensational gift of the Holy Ghost.

17 PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO THE EPHESIAN ELDERS,
20:28.

It was perhaps three or four years later when the Apostle Paul summoned the elders of the great Church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus on his way up to Jerusalem for the last time. He needed not to dwell upon the prior events of Christ's first advent, which we have all along seen standing as the foundation of this dispensation, nor even upon the last event of the series, that of the sending back from His glory the Spirit of His glorified humanity; but Paul does emphasize the responsibility these elders were under to fulfil unto their Church the spiritual administration for which the enduement of the Holy Spirit qualified them. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

18. PAUL BEFORE KING AGRIPPA, 26:6-28

Before Felix, the Roman governor, Paul had pleaded (24:21) that the case of the Jews against himself as

a preacher of the glorified Jesus involved the whole question of the resurrection of the dead. Now, before Agrippa the king, he being a Jew of Scriptural intelligence, Paul pleads that his whole case involved what is demanded regarding Jesus as the incarnate Christ by the writings of the prophets and of Moses. It is a discussion of the subject from a new situation, that of trial for political offense.

“6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: 7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? 9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. 12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. 14 And when we were fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21 Having therefore obtained

help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. 24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. 25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. 26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. 28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Nothing need be added upon this striking narrative, excepting to call attention afresh to Paul's way of epitomizing his preaching in verses 22, 23, as "witnessing . . . none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." This again plainly shows that all Old Testament Scripture demanded a first advent of the Son of God for just the events that did occur to Him, culminating in His return incarnate to His preëxistent glory; that all Old Testament writings foreshowed an intervening dispensation, proceeding from the basis thus laid and under a new effusion of the Holy Spirit; and that a second coming, of opposite character, must be awaited for the installation of the promised kingdom of the incarnate Son of God on earth. Consequently, any different program, whether in the way of connecting the kingdom with the first advent or in the way of adhering after Pentecost to the basis of the old dispensation, would be a denial and violation of all Scriptural revelation.

19. PAUL'S CONFERENCE WITH JEWS AT ROME, 28:20-31

This last scene in the Book of Acts before the curtain falls, while the circumstances are shifted, yet leaves behind exactly the same manner of new dispensational testimony from apostolical lips. After arriving in Rome, Paul called before him "the chief of the Jews," to establish connection with them, although as a prisoner at Rome, the same as he would do in freedom at any other place where Jews were residing; for Paul's principle of evangelization was ever, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

"20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against. 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to hear him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. 30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

This careful and thorough survey of the Acts leaves one profoundly impressed with the fact that a new dispensation has arrived. This new dispensation is clearly due to the fact that a series of momentous events, long anticipated and exactly delineated in advance, has transpired; which furnishes a new position in the progress of divine dealings with mankind. This new dispensational standpoint has its distinctive message,—a message for all mankind—the proclamation of these stupendous events and of their practical significance to everybody in the world. The administration of this new dispensation engages resources of the Holy Ghost quite distinctive in features and in power; and the new dispensation, while itself anticipated for centuries preceding, also as distinctly moves forward in anticipation of another just as distinct and even more momentous for Jew and Gentile.

In the light of the uniform testimony of the Book of Acts as to the new dispensational standpoint of the apostolical preaching, this chapter cannot be more appropriately concluded than by quoting at large from a written illustration of the same preaching to be found in 1 Corinthians 15:1-28. However familiar this passage may be to the reader, yet he is requested to read it through under the light now gathered, for it will come as a new revelation. Especially apropos are vs. 1-4.

20. FORMULA OF PAULINE PREACHING

“1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I have preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas; then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater

part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11 Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

"12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16 For if the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

"21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (That is, after all the headship shall have been recovered for God by and in His Son Jesus Christ, the latter will still exercise that headship in the same subordination to the Father ever before shown by Him. This will be so entirely different from the course of Satan, who left his first estate in revolt against divine supremacy—as also from the course of the first Adam).

This noble passage first presents to us the formula, it might almost be called, of the apostolical preaching and of the Christian faith of this dispensation. It serves as a summary of what was made clear by the survey of the Acts. The importance of the crowning event of Christ's resurrection (culminating in His glorification) is then pressed, because upon the reality of His resurrection hangs altogether the possibility and the certainty of the resurrection of the dead, seeing that it is only by Him. Then the further dispensational stages are traced, beginning with the resurrection of the dead in Christ at His second coming, then the final resurrection connected with Christ's complete conquest in heaven and in earth, and finally the destruction of death itself as the last enemy; for as long as "death rules the world" the restoration of all things foretold in the Scriptures remains incomplete.

CHAPTER VI.

FULL GOSPEL MINISTRY IN THIS AGE

TO EVERY reader of the Gospels it must be apparent that Jesus' daily ministry of twofold character—preaching and healing, to put it most simply and essentially—was regarded by Him as being as incumbent upon Him as for Him to be steadfastly pressing on to the cross, the tomb and the glory above before ascending the throne of David. And it is evident that Jesus drew His orders—so to speak—to be so doing from Old Testament requirement. See Luke 4:16-21; Mat. 8:16, 17, etc. This same twofold ministry marks the apostolical period. It is an important question whether by the commandment of our Lord and by Old Testament requirement, this twofold or full Gospel ministry belongs to and should characterize this dispensation throughout. If this be true, the presentation of the facts belongs essentially to the author's present treatise.

I. THESE SIGNS SHALL FOLLOW

It is the Bible itself that says—although of natural and worldly things—"There is nothing new under the sun." The progress of this study has repeatedly brought to light the fact that the advancing dispensations have introduced nothing new, but that they have only carried forward in fresh stages and features the things which have been from the beginning. And it certainly is true in general of supernatural signs and wonders. Everybody admits that they are things of all ages of the past. The question now is whether they belong only to the past and not to the present, at least not to the whole of this age.

RELATION OF MIRACLES TO THE SPIRIT

It is not here important to go into a history of miracles prior to Christ's advent or during His ministry. There are several outstanding features connecting the two periods. First, there are but comparatively few specific instances which are fully narrated, whether in the Old Testament times or in the time of Christ; yet in both periods it is evident that miracles occurred so numerous as to be beyond all possible detailed narration. Secondly, it is evident that these signs and wonders far more strongly marked Christ's ministry than former times. The main point to be noticed from a bird's-eye view of pre-apostolic history is that miraculous "signs . . . follow" quite commonly whenever and wherever special operations and agencies of the Spirit of God are present. It gives one the impression that, so far from signs and wonders, healing miracles, etc., being abnormal and foreign, it is just the contrary; the absence of such signs is a pretty fair proof of the decline of spiritual operations and agencies.

The very thing which Jesus promised for this age was the greatly increased agencies and operations of the Holy Spirit. In John 7:38, 39, Jesus said of the times just ahead, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; [namely, "as the Scripture hath said," as the Old Testament promised for the new age. And why had He not yet thus been given?] because Jesus was not yet glorified.)" And in Acts 1:8, Jesus said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." That this "power," and this flowing out of "living waters," was to include healing signs and wonders is evident from Jesus' words in John 14:12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that be-

lieveth on me, the works that I do [shall be doing] shall he do also; and greater works than these [that I have been doing] shall he do; *because I go unto my Father*" (whence I will work more mightily). How plainly this shows that the giving of the Holy Spirit by Jesus from His glorified bodily presence above should, even "as the [Old Testament] Scripture hath said," be marked by increased and intensified miraculous workings. And this dispensation opened with just these characteristics,—with the signs of an extraordinary, unprecedented effusion of the Holy Spirit and with results in the saving of souls and the miraculous deliverance of bodies corresponding thereto.

RELATION OF MIRACLES TO FAITH

Now these characteristics were not confined to apostolical presence and ministry. It was a most natural observation for the Apostle Paul to make to the churches of Galatia,—note, not a single local church, but the many churches of a large province of Asia Minor—"He therefore that *ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you*, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:5). The casual way in which this remark is made clearly implies something common in all sections among the churches; in fact, it indicates a law of things among Christ's churches; namely, that wherever there is lively faith there is a free "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:19), and under that "supply" there is a plentitude of supernatural manifestations of the Spirit. The principle of this is not denied today even by those who deny a place to miracles in the usual acceptance. All spiritual Christians are looking, longing and praying for spiritual manifestations of some kinds, and according to their prayer and faith and devotion, such manifestations are given. Especially have striking signs of Christ's presence and power characterized all seasons

of true revival and followed the ministry of all mightily endowed servants of the Lord. And even miracles of healing have been writ too large on all the pages of Gospel history down to the present day for any careful reader to be left in ignorance of the fact that the day of such miracles is not past even yet. The sad fact is that such are the assumptions of the progress and sufficiency of "medical science" and of the "arts of surgery," that divine healing direct is little expected and very largely refused welcome. The serious calamity of this is not primarily a matter of more or less bodily cure, but of more or less of the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." The object of the present chapter is to show the *essential place* belonging to miracles throughout this dispensation. By miracles is meant such as preeminently marked the inception of the dispensation, most particularly the miracles necessary to the triumphs of the Gospel.

MARK 16:15-20

Passing by all dispute over the authenticity of Mark 16:15-20, this passage will be taken as the most convenient synopsis of just what is meant as the essential miraculous character intended by Jesus to mark this dispensation throughout.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

This passage is of sweeping dispensational character in all its language.

In the first place, Mark as an evangelist is pre-eminently the evangelist *at large*, unlimited by racial confines. Then, this passage gives the *world-wide commission*, both in general and in particular; "Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*." It is beyond fair dispute that this commission covers all the dispensation, and not merely some particular part or parts. Why so? Because the end of the commission is *the salvation of everybody who will believe the preached Gospel*. Does that warrant the neglect of any *individual* in any *nation* in any *generation* during the dispensation? Certainly not! Assurance is held out that, while all hearers may not believe, but that the rather many will disbelieve and be damned, yet that every one might believe unto salvation, and that some will do so.

The further equally unrestricted dispensational feature of this passage is that "these signs shall follow." When and how long? "Shall follow them that believe." This certainly warrants no limitation of "signs" as to locality or time, excepting only the limitation which is implied by want of "them that believe."

Again, the power and the authority of these signs belong to the whole age—"in my name." Alas, that Christendom is attempting so much today apart from His name, even contrary to His name! But, bad as the case may be, no one contends that the name of Jesus is not available to believers since the days of the Apostles. Well then, it is by the name of Jesus that these signs were promised to follow; that is, these signs are available whenever and wherever there are believers to prove it by faith in His name.

THESE SIGNS

The demonstrations of the Spirit and of power which are here specified may, then, with certainty be claimed for the whole age, barring only that faith is not to be

found. How much evidence and even profession of unbelief exists today is conspicuous in every-day "Christian" life, teaching and ministry. Not only is the talk of the pulpit and of the pew, the testimonies and the prayers of the Church prayer meetings, not full of recognition of these signs, but, on account of actual unfriendliness and opposition, the recognition of them even moderately and timidly has to be maintained generally outside the pale of the regular denominational churches. Rapidly, however, at the present time, wonders upon wonders of truly evangelical character are challenging the attention of a spiritually enfeebled and an unwilling Church.

The Master committed His name and His promise for this age to certain definite signs that should follow the ministry of faith. Mark's passage bristles with particulars, even though but few, as if they are to be considered as the most essential ones. As has been said, the miracles are to be taken not as mere wonders to excite curiosity or as credentials accrediting the messengers of the Gospel; they are essential elements of the work of great salvation belonging to the age succeeding the glorification of the Son of man. They should be examined in that light in detail.

1. THE EXPULSION OF DEVILS OR DEMONS

It requires but little knowledge and discernment to appreciate that nothing so obstructs the progress of the Gospel as the presence, the power and the activities of evil spirits. The vast distance to which the Church has fallen away from her power and calling is strikingly evidenced by the practical ignorance and even denial of devils in this day. Orthodoxy insists upon a Devil, Satan, while practically denying devils, or demons. And yet, there is not one less of these evil presences now than in the days of our Lord or of His Apostles. Not one of them has gone out of business, not one of them

has been cut off from former access to and workings in, with and against men, women and children. If anything, two thousand years more of activity has increased their resourcefulness. The torments, the oppressions, the obsessions and the possessions of demons under our very eyes are more common and appalling than in those by-gone days, for the very reason that they were then recognized and dealt with after some fashion, whereas the demons and their workings are now viewed and treated in a purely materialistic way. What can a pill or a plaster, operation or opiate do with demons? Most commonly such resorts only add to their delight and their deviltry. The fact is that individuals, whole churches and entire communities may lie bound by demoniacal agency beyond the power of ordinary preaching, praying and organized effort to loose souls unto salvation. As a part of Gospel machinery, the expulsion of demons is essential today in order to any adequate advance of salvation.

2. SPEAKING WITH NEW TONGUES

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." There is a lack of satisfying evidence of salvation excepting the new creation is manifest by a new tongue, a testimony of fire, even if only in one's native language. But no one probably will seriously dispute that more than this is meant here. It must be admitted that "unknown tongues" are included, if not exclusively meant; i. e., tongues not known to the speaker, perhaps not to the hearers without an interpreter. See 1 Cor. 14:5, 13, 27, 28.

The question arises as to the purpose and uses of such new tongues as a practical ground for their exercise throughout the age, as this passage evidently contemplates. It is easy to see what the immediate practical use and purpose of the "other tongues" given on the day of Pentecost was. "We do all hear them speak

in our tongues the wonderful works of God." We may call this the evangelistic use and purpose of supernatural tongues, for the immediate and unhindered heralding of the Gospel to those not otherwise immediately accessible because of the barrier of strange language. This missionary use of tongues may be included in Paul's remark: "I thank God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Cor. 14:18). Probably the same is included in 1 Cor. 12:10: "to another divers kinds of tongues." So, while other instances of this evangelistic use of other tongues are lacking in the record, yet sufficient evidence is found to warrant the conclusion that the prevalence of this use of tongues, according as occasion called for it, is to be presupposed. And it is evident that there has been no change of conditions since that day to render this gift less useful for the immediate communication of the Gospel to dying men naturally inaccessible to the Gospel messenger, whether the hearers be heathen abroad or foreigners in the midst at home. What a wonderful provision for the salvation of souls who might otherwise never hear and be saved, or might not do so without serious delay!

But besides this important use of other tongues, a use not without examples—perhaps very many—in the past century of missionary revival, other uses are explained in the Scriptures, especially in First Corinthians. "Kinds of tongues" and "the interpretation of tongues" are given appropriate places in the spiritual organization of the Church of this dispensation—"to profit withal"; which evidently means, for the benefit of any company of saints as a body. See 1 Cor. 12:7, 10, 28. The same is clearly indicated in 1 Cor. 14:5, 26. Besides this, the desirability and value of this gift for purely private benefit is clearly explained in the same chapter (vs. 2, 17, 28). The last two uses, the congregational and the private, have large illustrations in the present day. But even were there no

modern illustrations of these three uses of other tongues, yet the uninterrupted desirability and value of this gift in all these uses must be apparent to an open mind. See 1 Cor. 14:18. There is nothing in the nature of the gift or in its uses to militate at all against the apparent intention of the Master to have this gift in uninterrupted exercise from Pentecost till the greater Pentecost which is to attend the return of Jesus and to be marked by such signs in still greater degree. See Acts 2:16-21.

3. SUPERNATURAL PRESERVATION AGAINST SERPENTS AND POISONS

Here again the suggestion lies right at hand that this provision belongs to the sphere of victory over Satan and over obstacles to the success of the Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel in "all the world" and to "every creature," especially in the rapid progress rendered possible by the gift of tongues, would involve frequent and serious danger from serpents and poisons. Instances of supernatural deliverances, after the manner of Paul's escape from the viper, have not been wanting throughout the dispensation thus far, not only in the distant propagation of the Gospel, but also in the midst of similar exigencies arising right at home.

Again it is to be remarked that there is nothing in the progress of the dispensation to render this provision improbable or less desirable and valuable. The objection may be urged that science now offers available antidotes quite sufficient for such exigencies. But is it so certain that such is the case? Is the present day better off in this matter than that day? But, even praising modern "science" for achievements in this direction, yet the spiritual gain, the Gospel-gain, of having an antidote in Jesus' name for all cases and always right at hand is evident.

4. THE RECOVERY OF THE SICK

"In my name. . . . shall they lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover." There can be no question of the need of a means of recovering the sick in all generations of this age as well as at the beginning. Sickness, suffering, ailment, physical incapacity,—all is in evidence yet in practically undiminished degree, if not in increased degree. No boon could be greater, at least of a temporal character, than for the power of the name of that Great Physician from Nazareth to be available till He reappears, as was the power of His visible presence formerly.

The distinctiveness of this mode of recovering from sickness is patent. Its differentiation from all medical, mental or physical modes of effecting cures is beyond question to any fair-minded, clear-sighted judge. It is clearly the continuation of Christ's own supernatural ministry from out the unseen which He began visibly to perform before leaving this earth. And the instrumentality of believing followers is not different now in principle from that which He exercised through the Twelve and the Seventy, bidding them in the authority and power which He gave them "against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." "The seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us *through thy name*." It is Jesus Christ Himself working by the power of the Holy Ghost through believers as instruments, even as Paul expressed it, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which *Christ hath not wrought by me*, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have *fully preached the gospel* of Christ" (Rom. 15: 18, 19). Here we have repeated the essential age-long factors of the full Gospel commission: Christ sends His servants to

all lands and to all inhabitants as His instruments in continuing through them "all that Jesus began both to do and teach"; these instruments of His hands were expressly enjoined not to attempt this dual ministry before His hand should come upon them through the enduement of the Holy Spirit; and the object in view was to give full extension of the Gospel to the end of salvation to all that would believe.

THE TWO MOST COMMON SIGNS

It does not require much discriminating study to perceive, in the light of actual apostolical ministry, that, just as in the case of Christ's own ministry, the casting out of demons and the healing of the sick constituted the far more common signs in the early days of the Church. While the record itself, both of Jesus' ministry and of that of the Apostles, shows a frequency of other miracles up to the full measure required by circumstances, and while it is entirely safe to assume that very many others of similar kinds occurred which are not recorded (See John 20:30, 21:25), yet it is evident that there was a need for and a prominence of these two lines of miracle far exceeding that of all other classes.

And it is not difficult to perceive why just these two signs are so linked together. They really constitute two complementary parts of one side of human salvation. The casting out of demons is largely a matter pertaining to physical release even as is the healing of disease and sickness. Demon presence and power in a person's life and being is by no means confined to the actual and entire surrender of the inmost personality to the demon's abode and sway. Lesser degrees of possession are far more common. When Satan entered into Judas, Judas "went out" into a "night" not only physical but spiritual also; before that he could abide in the presence of the Master and he still had the sop of saving friendship extended to him. But more generally demonism in a life does

not preclude salvation, although sometimes exorcism is necessary before salvation can take place; and often demonism is found in the experiences of saved ones without the loss of fellowship with Christ. There is a very wide range of demon presence and power which, in manifold ways and degrees, involves the brain, the senses and the bodily members and functions. Very many conditions commonly viewed as disease are not such and cannot be dealt with successfully as such, at least without first casting out the spirit directly producing and lodged in those symptoms.

This last is implied in the case of the "woman which had a *spirit of infirmity* eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself" (Luke 13:11). Jesus first pronounced her loosing, and then "He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God." Jesus afterwards spoke of her as "a daughter of Abraham, whom *Satan hath bound*, lo, these eighteen years."

Still more plainly is the same revealed in the account of a lunatic boy which is recorded in Matt. 17:14-18, Mark 9:17-27 and Luke 9:38-42. According to Mark, the father spoke to Jesus of his son as having "a dumb spirit." In Matthew's account the father speaks of his son as "lunatick, and sore vexed," while in Luke it reads, "a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to *cast him out*; and they could not." In Matthew it says that Jesus "rebuked the devil; and he *departed out of him*; and the child was *cured from that hour*." In Mark it reads, "Jesus.....rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that they said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand,*

and lifted him up; and he arose." In Luke it reads, "Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father."

These narratives furnish striking instances of the close alliance between demonism and disease. Very common are *vexing* conditions of body and of mind, and *torments* of body and of mind; and it is noticeable that just such conditions are attributed in Scripture to demoniacal presence and afflictions. Yet such explicit rules of diagnosis are not given as to dispense with the need of the Spirit's gifts of discernment, by which to detect the evil spirits, their lodging-places and their particular operations.

Quite often the expulsion of evil spirits from distressed and oppressed ones, and the healing of all manner of diseases and sicknesses, are classed together in Christ's ministry as His daily labor along with preaching and teaching. See Matt. 4:28; 9:35, etc. A fair epitome of this side of His constant ministry was given by Him in meeting the Pharisees who thought to intimidate Him by saying, "Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee." Jesus replied, "Go ye, and tell that fox [Herod], Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected" (i. e., get through this mission). "Nevertheless I must walk [travel] to day, and to morrow, and the third day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem," Luke 13:31-33.

This intimate association of the exorcism of evil spirits and of the healing of sicknesses is likewise the outstanding feature of apostolical ministry. "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one" (Acts 5:16). Similar was the ministry of Philip, the deacon (Acts 8:5-7), presumably of Stephen, the

deacon (6:8), as well as of the Apostle Paul (19:11, 12, 28:8, 9).

The unavoidable conclusion reached by a careful and open study of the place these twin blessings—of riddance from evil spirits and healing from disease by the name of the glorified Jesus alone—occupy in all New Testament writing, is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ takes in for this entire dispensation, as its scope of immediate full salvation, not only the preaching of the word of salvation for men's souls, but also the proclamation and ministry of the riddance of mortal men from devils and diseases through faith alone in the name of Jesus Christ, the glorified Son of Man. It is a twofold ministry, yet one salvation, that of soul and body, although for the body the salvation is but partial, owing to remaining mortality, and only anticipatory of the finished "redemption of our body" to be received at the second coming of Christ.

It seems now to be beyond candid contention, that the continuance of miracles—regularly and predominantly those relating directly to demonism and disease—was intended by Jesus to extend unbroken and undiminished throughout this dispensation; that the Apostles and early Christians so understood it; and that there is nothing arising from the progress of the dispensation to render this less essential for the objects of the age in which we are living.

It is a powerful corroboration of this to find that just this dual character of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ was strikingly prefigured for this whole dispensation, by the most applicable type of the character of this age to be found in the old Levitical system. This will be treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

FULL GOSPEL MINISTRY IN THIS AGE, CONCLUDED

II. THE TWO PENTECOSTAL WAVE LOAVES

The Two Wave Loaves in the Natural

THE revolution of the year was marked off for the Jews by the Mosaic law in a striking religious way into three agricultural periods. The threefold religious division is thus described in Deut. 16:16: "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles." The agricultural principle on which the scheme of division was made is indicated partly by Ex. 23:16, where the second feast is called "the feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labors, which thou hast sown in the field" (that is, the grain harvest), and the third feast is called "the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field" (that is, the final ingatherings from orchard and vineyard); while in Ex. 12:2 we are shown that the feast of unleavened bread was to fall in the early days of the year: "This month [Nisan, on the fifteenth day of which the Passover feast should begin] shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

Another presentation of the three annual festivals is given in Lev. 23:4-44, where we are able to obtain a still more definite chronology of the three divisions of the Jewish year. It is here commanded that on the fourteenth of the first month (Nisan) the Lord's Passover should be slain on the afternoon, while that night, being

the fifteenth of the month, the seven-day feast of unleavened bread should begin. These seven days did not begin on the same day of the week in successive years, but they would always cover the regular weekly Sabbath. We find it ordained in this passage, that on "the morrow after the Sabbath" "ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." This wave sheaf signified that the grain harvest was ready for the sickle. The passage further goes on to show that from the Sabbath of the passover week seven full weeks were to be counted off, "even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord." This "new meat offering," presented on what we call the day of Pentecost (fifty.....days), is thus described: "Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves—of fine flour—baken with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord." That is, while the sheaf offering was the firstfruits of the grain harvest standing in the field awaiting the sickle, the "new meat offering" of the "two wave loaves.....of fine flour.....baken with leaven" were the firstfruits of the grain harvest now in the flour,—reaped, threshed, winnowed, ground and stored in the family habitations. The passage also shows that four months later; i. e., in the seventh month, was to be "the feast of ingathering," or of Tabernacles, marking "the end of the year" so far as actual produce was concerned. Here the agricultural year took its turn—through plowing and sowing—back in the direction of the next harvest and ingathering.

We cannot wonder that the Jewish year was called a "sacred year," when we note afresh its marked religious significance. The year began with the month during which occurred the paschal feast. This was first a thanksgiving memorial of Israel's exodus from Egypt.

It also embraced, as we have seen, the offering of the wave sheaf. This was an act of obedient homage and of fervent gratitude to God for the grain crops standing in the fields, which, however, could not with divine approval be touched before thus first thanking and honoring Him as the giver thereof. A second outstanding and superior point of progress in the year was the day of Pentecost in the third month, when like homage and thanks were rendered to Jehovah by the two wave loaves for the year's new supply of flour and meal now stored up in the habitations of the people. The third, final and supreme point of progress came in the middle of the seventh month when, by a great week-long people's festival, a most grateful celebration was elaborately made unto Jehovah for the completed ingatherings of field, orchard and vineyard.

THE TWO WAVE LOAVES IN THE SPIRITUAL

It should be well known to all Christians that these three festivals stand for things in Jesus Christ. They not only gave acknowledgment to Him as the faithful Jehovah fulfilling His covenant of seed-time and harvest, but they also were a channel of expression for spiritually minded Israelites to acknowledge Him as the faithful author of all spiritual good through the revolving seasons. But more especially did these festivals serve as prophetic types of things to be brought to light in the prospective and promised manifestation of Jehovah in the flesh. As such, these festivals correspond to three great outstanding consummations in the progress of the Son of God's incarnate unfolding of what He is given of God to be to His people.

The Passover feast corresponds to the death and resurrection of the Son of Man; the wave sheaf, offered "on the morrow after the Sabbath," typified the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week as "the firstfruits of them that slept"; the feast of weeks

corresponds to the time of Jesus' glorification on high, outpouring the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost as represented by "the two wave loaves.....of fine flourbaken with leaven." The feast of ingatherings, or of Tabernacles, corresponds to His second coming to earth, to inaugurate the era of full enjoyment of grace so far harvested and to anticipate the product of grace in the next and everlasting age of the new heavens and the new earth.

We venture to reiterate. The Passover festival had a double significance. The slain lamb and the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread were memorials of Egypt and the exodus therefrom, while the wave sheaf was the earnest of the actual subsistence in the land of promise. So the crucifixion of Jesus met the dark, bitter bondage of sin with the power of emancipation; but only the resurrection of Jesus affords participation in the new and eternal life promised in the Gospel. And just as the feast of weeks, or of Pentecost, marked the beginning of the full enjoyment in actual bread baken with loaves of what was represented prospectively by the wave sheaf, so the resurrection even of Jesus was to His followers but the earnest, the anticipation and promise, of what He was to become to them when He poured out upon them from His glorified body the fulness of His Spirit. Again, likewise, a far greater stage of progress awaits the Lord's people, as to what God has made His Son Jesus to be for His people when "*the feast*," that of Tabernacles, shall have its fulfillment in Jesus' return to bring His Church into the millennial reign with Him over restored Israel and over the nations.

Special Features of the Wave Loaves

A closer examination of the two wave loaves of baken leavened bread which specially characterized the feast of weeks (Pentecost), may now be in place. The first peculiarity of these loaves is that they were leavened. In

view of the careful exclusion of leaven from the Levitical sacrifices, this feature at first seems surprising and perplexing. Does it not read in Lev. 2:11: "No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire?" But this cannot conflict with Lev. 7:18: "Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings." The distinction here lies between a sacrifice by fire as an atoning offering and a sacrifice without fire as a tribute of thanksgiving. The sheaf offering was not burnt in whole or in part, but only waved, or heaved, before the Lord as an act of homage and thanksgiving for the abundant standing harvest which it represented. So the two Pentecostal wave loaves were not "an offering to the Lord made by fire," but an offering to be waved, or heaved, before the Lord as an act of homage and thanksgiving unto Jehovah for the abundant harvest now stored in fine flour and meal in the habitations of the people and waiting to be used in leavened condition.

Another important distinction lay in the fact that the unleavened bread of meat offerings "made by fire" was "holy," or "most holy," and could be eaten only by the priestly families; while the leavened bread offered in thanksgiving represented the "common bread" of daily and universal use. The presentation of the two loaves on the day of Pentecost was, therefore, an expression of gratitude and homage for the new year's supply of the common daily food for the whole people. The unleavened bread represented Jesus Christ as the meat offering from us unto God for His satisfying food; the leavened bread symbolized Jesus Christ as God's gift of the bread of eternal life to mankind for daily and universal enjoyment and sustenance.

JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE. JOHN 6

This representation of Jesus Christ, as the bread of life given by God to mankind, was emphasized by Jesus Himself as recorded in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel. He rebuked the people for the shallow popularity which they were extending to Him so lavishly after the miracle of the loaves and two small fishes, on the ground that they sought Him not from spiritual insight into His miracles, but only from the carnal curiosity of eating the loaves to their fill. He cautioned them not to make such effort for perishable meat, even though miraculously provided, but to make all effort for that meat—betokened by the other—"which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him [Jesus of Nazareth] hath God the Father sealed" (authenticated as His eternal Son incarnate). When they inquired what God would have them do, Jesus replied, "This is the work of God [that He requires of you], that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (that is, that ye accept Him as the Son of God come in the flesh). They asked Him what sign He had to give them that they should accept Him as the Christ. "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat." "What dost *thou* work?" This gave Jesus His text. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that 'bread from heaven.' " The manna was only the symbol of the "bread from heaven"; and only such Israelites as then saw through the visible perishable manna their ever-present, never-failing invisible Bread found true life. "But my Father giveth you [as He did them] the true bread from heaven. For the *bread of God* is he which cometh down [incarnate] from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread." Shallow and carnal was their thought still, as the sequel proves. "And Jesus said

unto them, I AM the *bread of life*: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

How much all this suggests to us of most important and precious truth! Spiritual Israelites in the desert were eating of that spiritual Bread, that always invisibly supplied the camp, and that bread was Christ; to them the manna was a striking and precious symbol of the True Bread, Jesus Christ. And the visible, perishable bread was a pledge to them that some day the True Bread should "come down from heaven" in visible and bodily manifestation. So also Spiritual Israel in the promised land were eating the True Bread from heaven, which bread was Jesus Christ. Their daily, perishable bread was to them a striking and precious symbol of Him, and also a pledge to them that some day He would "come down from heaven" in human manifestation. Especially was the bread as used in the Levitical sacrifices a delight to spiritual eyesight, as the symbol of the True Bread God was giving to believing hearts and as the type of the appearing in due time of that True Bread in visible manifestation. And what does "grace" at our daily meals mean, but that we behold in our daily food both the miracle of God's love and goodness and the True Bread—Jesus Christ—which the Father giveth from heaven, of which the natural bread is a beautiful symbol. Especially is this symbolism true and impressive in the use of the Lord's Supper.

It should here be carefully noted that, just as the two wave loaves were representative of the Israelites' supply of daily food for the whole new year before them, so, as a type of things in Christ, those two loaves prefigured the supply of Jesus Christ as the True Bread which was to be afforded the world throughout the new Pentecostal dispensation. The two loaves were not exceptional; they were true samples of the stock in store for the whole year to come. They were not for priests alone, but they represented the people's common, daily bread. Whatever the two loaves meant, therefore, as a type of Pentecost, they meant not as something exceptional—just for the Apostles, or for the apostolical epoch—but as the literal sample of the "common bread" of God's children for the whole Pentecostal dispensation. So let us note anew very definitely, that it is the supply of Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost as the leavened bread—the people's daily food—for this entire new dispensation, that is typified by the two wave loaves.

THE TWOFOLD SALVATION

Why, now, should this "staff of life" in Jesus Christ for the world for this new dispensation be represented by *two* wave loaves? In what respect have we throughout this dispensation to be grateful to God for Jesus Christ as a *twofold Bread of Life*? In what sense has the Holy Spirit throughout this dispensation to reveal the glorified Jesus as a *twofold Saviour*?

Jesus Christ Himself furnished the answer to these questions, in those forecasts of His ministry from the presence of the Father which He made to His disciples before He left them, and which we noted in the last chapter. He very definitely forecast the continuance for this Pentecostal age of the same ministry which He began while here; and He very definitely commissioned His followers to maintain under the power of the Pentecostal Spirit a world-wide, age-long perpetuation of that

very ministry. Indeed, as we have before seen, Jesus only "began to do and teach" while on earth in body, what He was to continue to do through visible followers while absent Himself from earthly sight at the right hand of the Father; further still, this ministry was to be enhanced rather than diminished, just, said He, "because I go unto the Father."

As was noticed at large in the previous chapter, Jesus' former ministry of salvation was always a double ministry, corresponding to the double nature of man—soul and body—and to man's double need of restoration of soul and healing of body. This bodily salvation Jesus denominated expressly as "the children's bread," not exclusively so, but on the bodily side. Jesus never wrought healings as an exceptional matter, or as mere proofs of His divinity; He wrought them as an integral part of His essential ministry as the Saviour of mankind. He taught His disciples not to grieve over His departure from outward sight, because, after but a little time, they should see Him again and have Him with them, yea, and in them, though not apparently so to the world. This was to be far better for them in point of knowing Him and the Father, and it was to be far better for Him in point of ministering salvation among men, inasmuch as by His followers He could multiply His own ministry, as well as make it mightier from His superior position on high in glory.

It is evident, then, that Pentecost was not to open a new and different order of Gospel ministry, but only to introduce in fuller measure what Jesus had already begun under the limitations of His earthly residence, and what He was to continue under the advantage of glorified presence with the Father. Any essential break in the type of Gospel truth or ministry under the dispensation of the Pentecostal Spirit would rightly create perplexity and raise just doubt as to the actual glorification of Jesus and to His actual personal charge of the new dispensation.

As a matter of fact, no such break occurred. It was just the identity of Pentecostal manifestations with the known features of Jesus' former ministry, that the Apostles urged as the proof that God had glorified His Son Jesus and that Jesus was still in vital, mighty touch by the Holy Spirit and through His followers with earthly needs. And the absence of identical ministrations in word and deed during the centuries since has always given strong ground to the worldly-wise and even to honest believers to question and even to deny the unbroken vital relationship of "this same Jesus"—"the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"—with present needs here below.

If it be asked why to so large a degree the days of miracles have been past, to say nothing of Pentecostal days of salvation, the answer is very simple,—it is not due to any suspension of Christ's relationship to unchanged human needs, but it is due to the defection of His Church from Pentecostal faith and power. Nevertheless, cheering reflections of the faith and the power of the early Church have occurred from time to time through all the centuries, and the evidences have occasionally been given that the twofold bread of life has not been exhausted, has not been split in twain, has not been taken away, suspended or postponed in one part or the other to a future time.

THE TWOFOLD SACRAMENT

The contention that the two wave loaves typify the abundant twofold Gospel blessing of this entire dispensation is further supported by the teaching of Paul on the Lord's Supper, which is found in 1 Cor. 11:23-32.

"23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same

manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

In this passage Paul strongly emphasizes the two phases of Christ's atoning death for us,—the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood. He is equally emphatic in relating the two elements of the Lord's Supper—the bread and the wine—to those two phases of our Lord's sufferings. Paul says that our Lord said of the bread, "*This is my body which is broken for you;*" "take, eat:.....this do in remembrance of me." Also of the wine our Lord said, "*This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*" Here are two distinct memorials of Christ's dual form of suffering,—broken bread for broken body, cup of wine for shed blood. Our Lord is quoted as further showing that the two memorials combine to recall the one full death: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the *Lord's death* till he come." That "till He come" is to be noted; it signifies that both the observance and the significance of this ordinance continue throughout the dispensation until Jesus comes again.

In verse 27 the Apostle points out the possibility of so treating the Lord's Supper as to incur serious guilt: "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." The expression "unworth-

ily" cannot refer to deficient merit on the part of the communicant, but it must mean a manner of eating and drinking that robs the death of Christ of its due honor and worth. Failure duly to respect the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood, one or both, is to be guilty with respect thereto. Hence, in the next verse, exhortation to avoid this is given; and here again the same twofold distinction is maintained: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him *eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*"

Now verse 29 warns us that in thus eating and drinking "unworthily," and in being thus "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," a judgment from God is incurred. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Note, that, while the same twofold distinction of eating and drinking is maintained, the judgment is represented as following failure to discern, not the Lord's body and blood, but only for "not discerning the Lord's body;" that is, His broken body. This surprises us; but the reason for this discrimination is made plain by the next verse, where it is shown that the nature of the judgment corresponds to the failure to discern the Lord's broken body: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Bodily weakness, sickness, and even death, were prevailing unduly and sadly among the Corinthian believers in direct consequence of their unworthy treatment of the Lord's Supper, including their failure, if not especially for their failure, in "not discerning the Lord's [broken] body." This plainly shows that a worthy treatment of the Lord's Supper, and specifically the "discerning of the Lord's [broken] body," holds a definite relation to the physical health, the bodily strength and due length of days of the followers of Jesus Christ. In other words, it is plain that the due observance of the Lord's Supper has to do with health and prosperity of body as

well as of soul. It is also plain that it is the broken body of the Lord, in distinction from His shed blood, that relates specifically to our bodily benefit, so that included in the worthy observance of the sacrament is the eating of the bread as an *emblem of the healing and preservation of body which was provided for us through the breaking of Jesus' body*. Failure to recognize and appropriate this in observing the Supper must result in failure of health, strength and life itself among the saints. This "damnation" (or judgment) is described in v. 32 as chastening from the Lord inflicted for the purpose of saving believers from the condemnation of the world.

BODILY HEALING PROVIDED IN THE ATONEMENT

The discussion just closed projects the present subject forward for further discussion. Again the strong ground for our proposition is found in Old Testament prophecy. All evangelical believers recognize that Isaiah 53 (together with 52:13-15) presents the most symmetrical and comprehensive outline of the career and atoning work of the Redeemer to be found in a single passage of Scripture. And it is almost startling to find how fully this passage puts our Lord's assumption of our physical maladies parallel with His assumption of our spiritual maladies. This is considerably obscured by King James' translation.

In verse 3 we read: "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with *grief*." "Surely he hath borne our *griefs* and carried our sorrows" (v. 4). "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to *grief*" (v. 10). In each of these instances the Revised Version informs us that the Hebrew word translated "*grief*" is "*sickness*." That word is so translated elsewhere throughout the Old Testament. Besides that, all first class translators use the word "*pains*" for "*sorrows*." And the word "*afflicted*," in v. 8, distinctly refers to physical

pains. And the Hebrew for "stripes," in v. 5, is "bruises" (physical). Very prominent, then, is the physical side of this picture of our Lord's ministry and atoning work. "He was a man of pains and acquainted with sickness." "Surely he hath borne our sickness and carried our pains." "And through his bruises was healing granted us" (Isaac Leeser's translation). "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath made him sick."

Is it strange that a prophecy, which so graphically, minutely and comprehensively delineates the Messiah as He was found in Jesus of Nazareth, should recognize in proper proportion so prominent an aspect of His earthly ministry as that of His healing of the sick, especially when it does not at all lower or curtail the estimate of the Redeemer's relation to our sins? Nothing is lost by restricting these expressions to literal sickness. A full statement of redemption from sin is still retained, and the prophecy is thus left free from redundancy and vagueness.

We will now note more closely how this prophecy presents the healing as an integral part of the vicarious atonement. In the passage "Surely he hath borne our sicknesses and carried our pains" (v. 4), the Hebrew words for "borne" and "carried" are the same that are used in verses 11 and 12 for the substitutionary bearing of sin: "He shall bear [carry] their iniquities," and, "He bare the sin of many."

Whatever be the sense of these two Hebrew verbs, the same sense must apply in both cases,—of sin-bearing and of sickness-bearing. To pervert the sense in the one case would give liberty to pervert the sense in the other case. And that the sense of these verbs, as relating to sin, not only here in this prophecy, but everywhere else in the Old Testament, is strictly vicarious and expiatory, no evangelical student denies. This prophecy, therefore, gives the same substitutionary and expiatory character

to Christ's connection with sickness that is everywhere given to His assumption of our sins.

The Holy Spirit has wonderfully interpreted this passage and emphasized its true sense in Matt. 8:16, 17: "When the even was come they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.*" We now recognize this translation from the Septuagint as the true rendering of Isa. 53:4. And the Spirit in Matthew shows us by His application to healings, that it is to be taken literally in Isaiah. We are accordingly shut up by the Spirit to the redemptive sense of Christ's bearing of sickness.

This interpretation is fully sustained by Prof. Delitzsch, one of the most eminent and devout exegetes of modern times, in his exposition of Isa. 53:4: "Freely but faithfully does the Gospel of Matthew translate this text, 'Himself took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses'! The help which Jesus rendered in all kinds of bodily sickness, is taken in Matthew to be a fulfillment of what in Isaiah is prophesied of the servant of Jehovah. The Hebrew verbs of the text, when used of sin, signify to assume as a heavy burden and bear away the guilt of sin as one's own; i. e., to bear sin mediatorially in order to atone for it. But here, where not sins but our sicknesses and pains are the object, the mediatorial sense remains the same. It is not meant that the servant of Jehovah merely entered into the fellowship of our sufferings, but that He took upon Himself the sufferings which we had to bear and deserved to bear; and, therefore, He not only bore them away, but also in His own person endured them in order to discharge us from them. Now, when one takes sufferings upon himself which another had to bear, and does this not merely in fellowship with him but in his stead,—we call it *substitution.*"

Here, then, the best results of rigid exegesis show that the bearing and removal of human disease is an integral part of redeeming work, a provision of the atonement, a part of the doctrine of Christ crucified; that Jesus is Saviour of the body as well as of the soul, and that—

“He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.”

Isaiah stands not alone in asserting this parallelism, this dual atonement. The Psalmist sweetly sings: “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases” (103:3). Isaiah again testifies of the double restoration of Israel: “the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity” (33:24). And the Apostle Peter, in defining the atoning work of Jesus, confirms these testimonies, especially that in Isaiah 53:5, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). This emphasis put by the inspiring Spirit upon the “stripes” and the “bruises” suffered by Jesus as the Lamb of God, and the value of this part of His sufferings for our bodily benefit, becomes more impressive to us when we learn the particulars of such scourging as Jesus endured before being nailed to the cross. The following description is taken from Geikie’s “Life of Christ”:

“Victims condemned to the cross first underwent the hideous torture of the scourge, and this was immediately inflicted on Jesus. He was now seized by some of the soldiers standing near, and after being stripped to the waist, was bound in a stooping posture, His hands being behind His back, to a post, or a block, near the tribunal. He was then beaten at the pleasure of the soldiers, with knots of rope, or plaited leathern thongs, armed at the ends with acorn-shaped drops of lead, or small, sharp-pointed bones. In many cases not only was the back of the person scourged cut open in all directions; even the eyes, the face, and the breast were torn, and the teeth not seldom knocked out. Under the fury of the countless stripes, the victims sometimes sank—amidst screams, convulsive leaps, and distortions—into a senseless heap; sometimes died on the spot; sometimes

were taken away, an unrecognizable mass of bleeding flesh, to find deliverance in death, from the inflammation and fever, sickness and shame. *The scourging of Jesus was of the severest*; for the soldiers only too gladly vented on any Jew the grudge they bore the nation, and they would, doubtless, try if they could not force out the confession which His silence had denied to the governor. Besides, He was to be crucified, and the harder the scourging the less life there would be left to detain them afterwards on guard at the cross."

Eusebius, the great early Church historian, describing a scourging of some of the martyrs, wrote: "All around were horrified to see them so torn with scourges that their very veins were laid bare and the inner muscles and sinews, and even the very bowels exposed."

What is the bearing of this clear exhibit of a provision of bodily healing in the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ?

It makes it to be a blessing as general and far-reaching as the atonement itself or any provision of it; and there is ground for asserting that it is a true pledge of our bodily resurrection, being the earnest thereof. Bodily healing by direct divine agency becomes a boon for every believer in any period of Gospel history. It settles the question of our right and duty to preach it; it is not a mere unpopular opinion, it belongs to "the offense of the cross." It is not an indifferent question, to be held back from disquieting an easy-going and adulterous Church; it is a question of the real and present efficacy of the atonement. If that atonement has lost one element, or if our times no longer need this element of the atonement, are we sure that the atonement has not lost its other elements, or that our times have not outgrown the need of the atonement altogether? Does not a widespread disbelief in the Church as to this element of redemption expose the whole matter of redemption to serious doubt? The only possible refutation of the doctrine now explained is the *positive Scriptural proof* that Jesus *did not* bear our sicknesses mediatorially as He did our sins. Hence as the concluding part of this discussion we will add the topic following:

THE LORD'S HEALING IN HIS CHURCHES

Healing by Jesus Christ was no new thing at His advent in human form. It was an essential part of "the bread of God" in former times. It belonged essentially to the being and to the office of the Son of God, and ever must so belong. This He coined in His own word to Israel at Marah,—“I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Ex. 15:26). The Hebrew reads: “I” (Who am I?) “I am *Jehovah-Healer* to thee.” When did Jesus Christ become Healer? When He became Jehovah. When will He cease to be in office as Healer to His people? When He fails to be Jehovah to them. It is one of His eternal names, one of His essential, original and personal offices. It belongs to His eternal lambship and to His name as Son of God. Of course, then, it belonged to His being and ministry in the flesh before Calvary and to His expiatory work on the cross as the Lamb of God “manifest in these last times.” Of course, belonging to His publicly, humanly, physically manifested atonement on Calvary, it must belong to the memorial of the same left behind by Jesus in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as we have seen to be the case. And this shows that, as long as this memorial is in place, so long the recognition of healing in the atonement is incumbent upon the Church; and that this provision is in force throughout this entire dispensation is implied in 1 Cor. 11:26, in the words, “till he come.”

True it is, that, as many admit who deny healing in Jesus' name to the present age, when He comes, He will “arise with healing in his wings,” and the next age will witness healing, especially in Israel, to a degree never before realized. See Isa. 35. But that will be so only because of the saying, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.” It was a normal thing for divine healing so strikingly to follow Pente-

cost and its spread everywhere. It was the normal thing for the working of miracles to attend Christ's ministering of the Spirit in all the churches (Gal. 3:4). This was the "firstfruits of the Spirit," the "earnest of the Spirit" for us while we still "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).

How, then, could anything else be expected, than that Jesus should commission the Apostles and their successors to carry and minister healing wherever they carried the Gospel? How could we expect anything else than that, wherever the heralds of the cross organized converts into churches, the healing office in the name of Jesus should be set up for regular and permanent reliance? This is implied in Gal. 3:5, which has already been brought forward more than once; it is still more distinctly proved by the direction in Jas. 5:14-16: "Is any sick among you?" The Apostle James had just reminded his readers what course to pursue when "afflicted," on the one hand, and when "merry," on the other hand. "Let him pray," in the one case; "let him sing psalms," in the other case. The object in the case of these common, but absorbing, experiences of life, was to keep believers under beneficial ministry of the Holy Spirit in every state of life, whether the most common daily state, or the more special and occasional. How important is the same object for believers under the more testing experiences of sickness! There is great danger of spiritual loss through natural despondency in affliction and through carnal hilarity in happy times; and there is great danger of spiritual loss through worldly resorts in times of sickness.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed

sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Illustration is then immediately drawn from Elijah's miraculously closing the heavens from rain and then opening them with rain. It shows that the healing of sickness among believers is brought under the provisions of the supernatural agencies that Elijah dealt with. But this is no surprise to those who already have noted the promise: "If the Spirit of him that *raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also *quicken your mortal bodies* by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11).

"I am the Lord [Jesus Christ] that healeth thee." "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Just what the former meant to the Israelites at Marah, the latter means to believers today. The elder is the divinely appointed minister to the sick in the Church, and God's Word has appointed no substitute for the praying elder. Prayer is the prescription of God's Word to be administered by this minister of healing; its sufficiency is as great today as ever. The name of our Lord Jesus is the virtue, the potency of healing for God's children today as truly as ever before; nothing is authorized either to substitute or to add to the virtue that flows from Jesus Christ glorified through the exclusive channel of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The prayer of faith is "praying in the Holy Ghost." His power is in both the praying and the achievement of the praying. It is supernatural praying for supernatural results. This, with salvation of the soul, is Christ's uncanceled, unintermitted heritage.

PART VII

Apostolic Prophecy Prior to Revelation

Church Prophecy The Epistles

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT DISPENSATIONAL TRANSITION

THE quotation from John 16:12-14, which was emphasized at the close of Part Five, shows that Jesus had in reserve very extensive revelation of "things to come," which at that time they were unprepared to hear, but which should be made known to the Apostles after the coming of the Holy Ghost, and through Him as the new teacher. We will now take up this new body of prophecy as found in the Acts and the Epistles, without as yet including the Book of Revelation. Our first chapter, however, will trace the great, though quite gradual, transition from the old standpoint of prophecy to the new.

THE FAMILIAR HEBREW STANDPOINT STILL RETAINED

Passages not a few occur which speak from the familiar standpoint of all foregoing Hebrew prophecy.

1. Concerning the restoration of the Jews.

Acts 3:20, 21 was addressed to Jewish hearers directly: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 15:14-17 is directed to Jewish hearers: "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord,

and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." Rom. 11: 25-32 is addressed to Gentile believers, but concerning Israel, "For I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."

2. Concerning the Lord's coming in Judgment upon earthly enemies.

2 Thess. 1:7-9: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance upon them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Heb. 10:13: "From henceforth expecting [waiting] till his enemies be made his footstool." Acts 2:34, 35: "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Heb. 1:13: "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" Jude 14, 15: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of

these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." These passages, especially the last, include the original universal standpoint of prophecy.

3. Concerning Christ's coming as universal Sovereign.

Acts 17:31: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." 1 Tim. 6:14, 15: "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." Heb. 2:8: "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."

4. Concerning our Lord's coming in visible earthly aspect.

1 Cor. 1:7: "Waiting for the coming [revelation, visible appearing] of our Lord Jesus Christ." Col. 3:4: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Of course, this means our participating in glorified condition with Him in His public manifestation on the earth. 2 Thess. 1:7 and 1 Tim. 6:14 have already been quoted. 2 Tim. 4:1, 8: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." There is danger that we may

have our anticipations set upon Christ's coming to receive us to Himself in the skies to the neglect of His supreme revelation in glory and power on the earth. Of like significance is Titus 2:13. Peculiar interest attaches to Heb. 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." How appropriate is this description of the result of Christ's second earthly appearing! It will not be necessary for Him thus to reappear to "bear the sins of many," but His second coming is necessary for the "salvation" of that penitent remnant of watching, yearning Israelites of the last days. This seems to be the aspect of Christ's second coming which was before the mind of the Apostle Peter, when he wrote to the believing "strangers scattered [i. e., the Jewish Dispersion] throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" concerning the "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," "at the appearing of Jesus Christ," "at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:1, 5, 7, 13), and "when his glory shall be revealed" (4, 13), and "when the chief Shepherd shall appear" (5, 4). In 1 John 2:28, even for the Christian believers, the coming of Christ with reference to them is embraced in the superior thought of His "appearing," and in 3:2 the thought is altogether that of a joint glorified appearing of the believers with Him.

Even already it becomes apparent that the fundamental aspects of Christ's coming which pertain to Israel are of equal importance to the Church, even as the fundamental aspects of His coming pertaining to the entire race were found to be of equal importance to Israel. Yet the fact is that, after Pentecost, we are dealing with a new dispensation, for the custody of God's oracles for mankind was passed to other hands. The Hebrew age was set aside temporarily for the "Gospel Age"; Israel as God's messenger was dis-

placed by the Church of Jesus Christ. It will be remembered that Jesus plainly foretold that the kingdom of God, because of His rejection as the Messiah, was to pass from Jewish hands to other hands, Matt. 21:43: "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Yet Israel was only suspended as God's witness to the nations until she should welcome, on His return to them, Him whom they had refused so insultingly, Matt. 23:39: "For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

SENSE IN WHICH THIS IS "THE GOSPEL AGE"

While we cannot any too strongly distinguish between the two distinct dispensations, yet we need to guard ourselves against a quite possible and a very frequent error. Strictly speaking, the Gospel—God's promise of salvation to man through an invisible Redeemer and Saviour, who should in due time appear bodily and humanly in the earth—is both as wide as the race and as old as time. We, therefore, should never consider the so-called "Gospel Age" as "the beginning of the Gospel." This point has been made abundantly plain in our foregoing study. And yet, there is a most important sense in which this present dispensation—since Pentecost—is the Gospel Age. Jesus' ministry disclosed the Gospel in word and in work in unique fulness. He made the Gospel new and perfect in expression. Consequently it was henceforth to be "the gospel of Jesus Christ," the Gospel of which He was the author and the herald. All the same, however, it was "the everlasting gospel," both as to the past and as to the future.

In another sense too the Gospel of this age is "the gospel of Jesus Christ." He was not only the promulgator of it; the promise of God had from the beginning centered in Him, and it was Yea and Amen in Him.

Hence, since Pentecost "the gospel of Jesus Christ" has been the message for the world concerning Him,—concerning His person and His work; and that, not only historically, or biographically, but in respect to His present personal availability through the Holy Ghost. Preaching Jesus is preaching the Gospel. He is Himself the Gospel, God's spell, God's glad tidings. It is a person and His work, that has been in hand and borne to men as God's message since Jesus ascended on high. It was a gospel, then, in a very new sense which Jesus left to be proclaimed by His followers.

And this is the Gospel age as to the sphere of the Gospel's proclamation. While God never shut up any good thing from any part of the race, but has always deposited good things in particular hands only for the benefit of all mankind, yet it was a new thing as to sphere and manner of action when Jesus charged the Apostles with the Gospel commission as recorded in the four Gospels. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age, or dispensation]" (Matt. 28: 18-20). "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16: 15-18). "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission

of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49). "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. . . . As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 15:27, 17:18).

The above quotations have intimated that, conjoined with the new gospel to be preached and the new sphere of its proclamation, was a new qualification of power for its proclamation and ministry. It would be a serious error to consider that the gift of the Holy Ghost and of His enduing power is in principle or in fact new with this age, any more than that the covenant of God's grace is new with this age, or to consider that either was confined of old to Israel alone. Yet the promise of the Holy Ghost that Jesus gave the Apostles sounds almost like a new thing altogether. Especially so, when we add to the foregoing Acts 1:4, 5, 8: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. . . . But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Such was the promise and such its fulfilment that the words of John were entirely warranted—though so often mistaken and carried beyond their meaning by readers—when He said, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given" (7:39).

WHEN WAS THE CHURCH OF THIS AGE FULLY STARTED

With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost it is commonly held that the Church was originated. Is that quite true, even taking the term Church in a strictly dispensational sense?

It was a company of one hundred and twenty Jewish believers upon whom the Holy Spirit first fell. Thousands at Jerusalem heard them forthwith proclaim "the wonderful works of God" in the tongues of all nations. But the hearers and the three thousand converts from among them were all of "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven [who] were dwelling at Jerusalem." At most, it was only "Jews and proselytes" who heard the Gospel on that day. And it was years before even the Twelve came at all clearly to recognize the full extent of the great dispensational change from the Hebrew age to the Christian.

Among the original Apostles this transition was partially revealed to Peter some eight years after Pentecost, when he was strangely prepared by God through a vision to go, "nothing doubting," and preach the gospel to the house of Cornelius. See Acts 10 and 11. He was loosed from the Mosaic prohibition, of a Jew's keeping company or coming unto one of another nation, by being shown that he "should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). Upon reaching the assembled company and hearing how God had dealt with Cornelius, Peter exclaimed, as though it were practically a new discovery altogether: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but that in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (vs. 34, 35). And when, under Peter's message, "the Holy Ghost fell on them that heard the word," the Jews who accompanied Peter "were astonished . . . because that on the Gentiles also was

poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 44, 45). It was forthwith perceived that these Gentile believers also were eligible to the baptism with water, which Jesus had authorized the Apostles to administer.

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he was taken sharply to task by his brethren for going "in to men uncircumcised" and eating with them. But, when he had most graphically and forcibly narrated to them the story of God's dealings (Acts 11:4-17), "they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (v. 18).

Meantime, a movement in the same line was proceeding in a distant quarter and through non-official hands. The laymen of the Jerusalem Church took advantage of their dispersion, through the persecution following upon the martyrdom of Stephen, to scatter the Gospel all abroad as they "traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch," but "preaching the Word to none but unto Jews only." But at Antioch some of them—the love of Jesus in them for souls breaking through the rigid social barriers of Jewish separation—"spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great multitude believed, and turned unto the Lord" (11: 19-21). When "the tidings of these things came unto the ears of the Church which was in Jerusalem," Barnabas, a well-chosen investigator, was sent to Antioch. The facts of the situation so rejoiced the heart of this good man that, instead of interfering or reporting adversely to Jerusalem, he hurried to Tarsus, hunted up Saul, and joined with him in a whole year's evangelistic and deeper-life campaign at Antioch.

Consequently, it came to pass that, owing to the interference of influential Judaizing persons, a general Council was assembled at Jerusalem, to consider, in full formal session of Apostles, elders and mother-church members, whether Gentile believers should be recog-

nized and welcomed without any Mosaic conditions whatever as church-members, and not merely as Jewish proselytes. We should remember that this was some thirteen years after Pentecost, and that this was a purely Hebrew Christian Council. They decided, under the light of the foregoing circumstances and evidences, that God actually "put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:19), and "that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (v. 11).

Yet, notwithstanding all this, even Peter, some six years afterwards, incurred strong censure from Paul because "before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles [at Antioch]: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with them, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation" (Gal. 2:12, 13). This shows how imperfectly the character of the Church—founded upon the principle that in Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision" (Col. 3:11)—was practically accepted and established even down to nineteen years after Pentecost.

We see further that, for a long time, Jewish believers were inclined to lapse from Christ, the Anti-type, to the old types of Him, so that there was imperative occasion for such an apostolic writing as the "Epistle to the Hebrews." So also, there was urgent occasion for such a protest from Paul as is found in his letter to the Galatian churches, because legalistic agitators sought to bind Gentile believers in conscience to Mosaic obligations for spiritual progress, at least to the extent of being circumcised. This was not less than *twenty-five years after Pentecost*.

From this letter of Paul to the Galatians we learn that it was six years after the Council at Jerusalem, or

nineteen years after Pentecost, that, after much complicated consideration, the right hand of fellowship was given by the apostolic leaders at Jerusalem to Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles. And even then, apostleships to the circumcision and to the uncircumcision respectively were maintained right in the same geographical territory. This shows that, from the Jewish wing of the Church, there was a great lack of indiscriminating regard for Jewish and Gentile believers respectively. See Gal. 2. Paul himself—not one of the Twelve, although called of God and accredited after many years by the Hebrew Christian authorities as Apostle to the Gentiles—everywhere offered the Gospel first to Jews as the only logical course. He was, besides, a Jew himself, an “Hebrew of the Hebrews”; and he loved his brethren of Israel enough to wish, had it been needful, that he might be “accursed from Christ” for his “kinsmen according to the flesh.” But to him first and alone was given the most vivid conception of the Church as embracing all believers without distinction or denomination. He powerfully pictured this Church as the one spiritual body of Christ, the commonwealth of all saints, the undivided family of God. For this principle of the Church as an organic and universal unity, and for this characteristic of the new dispensation, he stood with all boldness, authority and consistency, with no respect to Peter, James, or to any other “pillars” of the Church.

It seems that, until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., the Church could not clear herself of these contradictory and obstructive features, and come into her true character and calling as a spiritual organization. Even Jewish Christians were still, as it were, praying from all parts of the world toward Zion. They rendezvoused there still largely for the annual feasts of the law. Mosaic customs and rites could not but be felt still by many as obligatory. Jewish communion would still amount among Hebrew Christians almost to clan-

nishness and, with many, even to legal exclusiveness. The Holy City was deeply venerated as the religious center even of Christianity, as well as the Mecca of Hebrew believers, especially of the older generation.

And, apparently, Jerusalem was still "the city of God, the place of the tabernacle of the most High." Apparently—so far as semblance went—God was "in the midst of her" that she should "not be moved." The imprecations of Jesus had largely faded from memory; the blood of Stephen seemed to have lost its cry for vengeance; and persecution pushed the many who were not too bold into compromise. The holy Temple stood in all its grandeur and apparent immovability. Its impressive offices were still fully maintained and were continually tempting impressible Hebrews to compromise their Saviour in His living all-sufficiency, as the end both of Law and of sacrifice. Moreover, the College of Apostles was there, and the law of the Gospel economy went forth, as it were, from Zion.

Hence, the shock of Jerusalem's fall came none too soon, and yet none too late. God had disowned the city and the Temple from Jesus' lips nearly two-score years before. Yet His grace lingered at Jerusalem for an extended generation for the sake of thousands of souls. It was not best either that the transition of dispensations should be too bald and abrupt. Religious confusion—bordering on dissolution if not anarchy—might have ensued. And Jesus ordained that first the world-wide evangelization should proceed from Jerusalem. But now the day of grace was fully over for Jerusalem, for all that the Temple represented, and for the obdurate nation. The cup of iniquity was full in 70 A. D. as it was not when they crucified Jesus.

With the ruin of the beloved city, the razing to the dust of the venerated Temple, the entire and permanent termination of the sacrificial economy, the complete and hopeless banishment of surviving Jews to all quarters

of the Roman Empire, not only was the Church de-centered from Jerusalem and dejudaized, but nothing objective was left for sentiment to cling to. This was the very thing the Church needed: that she might have no fixed earthly center, but that she might find her center in the perishing millions of all lands; and that she might embrace all believers, without any remaining traces of distinction or difference—religious, national, social, intellectual—as a body called out of all names and nations unto the name of the Lord,—“called Christians first at Antioch.”

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST'S COMING FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE CHURCH

IS IT to be wondered at that this new dispensational body of trustees of the kingdom of God, and that this new, intervening dispensation, filling up the great hiatus of connected Hebrew history in its progress to the full accomplishment of the Abrahamic covenant, that this wonder-plot of grace,—which is, as Paul says in Eph. 3:10, 11, “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”—should furnish occasion for such new disclosures connected with Christ’s return as He gives intimation of in these words of John 16:12, 13: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall guide you into all truth: . . . and he will show you things to come.”

What additions to second advent prophecy are to be found in the apostolical Scriptures prior to Revelation? We have already noted many passages which give fresh glimpses of prior revelations; we wish now to discover what Jesus referred to more especially when He said, “I have many things to say unto you” and “He will show you things to come.” These things are, of course, not to be found in the Acts, as this book is purely an evangelistic record; but they must be looked for in the apostolic letters to the believers and to the churches.

It is characteristic of the epistolary prophecy, that it does not occur *en masse*, like bed-rock, but mostly in brief, scattered portions, like nuggets of gold. The

apostolical predictions may, therefore, be better treated topically and grouped under several heads.

1. THE PERSONAL COMING

That personal coming, which shines like the Pole Star from Gen. 3:15 down through all Scripture, assumes the very brightness of the sun in the Epistles, where it stands for the coming in person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The somewhat vague "day of the Lord" now becomes the vivid, realistic "day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6, 11). It is almost startling to find that He, who in Isa. 45:23 solemnly protests "That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," is identified with our Jesus in Phil. 2:10, 11: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Very personal and intimate are Zechariah's words: "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee" (14:5); but we can understand the prophet's personal heart-glow better when we find that this is the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Thess. 3:13). This correlation, and yet striking distinction, between Old and New Testament prophecies justifies and impresses upon us the exhortation found in 2 Pet. 3:2: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour."

2. WATCHING FOR HIS COMING

In a new and different sense the idea of watching confronts us in the Epistles. What has already been said of the new personal aspect of the Coming would create an almost entirely new character of watching. But it is not that alone, or chiefly, that is now before us.

Watching is now not at all from the standpoint of the Hebrew remnant of the last days,—waiting for Messiah to appear to rescue and to restore to earthly kingdom. It is now a longing for the Lord Himself, from a personal, spiritual and affectionate standpoint. The Thessalonian converts at the very outset “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1: 9, 10). Paul speaks of “all who love his appearing” (2 Tim. 4: 8). Christian slaves were not stimulated to be looking out for their manumission, but were exhorted to be “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2: 13, 14). The secret of all this is found in His coming, not as our Deliverer, Restorer and King, but as our life: “If ye then be risen with Christ, . . . ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”; i. e., in glorified bodily manifestation (Col. 3: 1, 3, 4).

3. CROWNS WITH CHRIST

We have been made familiar previously with the Lord's coming to establish on earth the kingdom of heaven by restoring Israel as a kingdom under Him as their exclusive King. But in the Epistles, while the believers are not promised a share in the benefits of restored Israel, yet they are declared to be “Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3: 29). Peter speaks glowingly of the “inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God”

until "the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:4, 5, 7). The exalted plane of this inheritance is indicated by Paul's words in 2 Tim. 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." So also by Peter, in 1 Pet. 5:4: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Such passages indicate that the Church is watching for Christ's coming, not to establish an earthly kingdom over her, but to give her the rule of this kingdom with Himself. The Church is a body of citizens of the coming kingdom, like the remnant of Israel; but she is also to be the queen consort of Christ. Frequently are we assured that we shall (conditionally) "reign with Him." As to conditions of having rule with Christ, Paul furnishes an illustration in 1 Thess. 2:19, 20: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." This shows that crowns will be given in that day to such as can say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13). Frequently a condition is laid down which is expressed thus by Paul in 2 Tim. 2:12: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Again, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11); and, "he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26, 27). Our object in citing these passages, however, is not merely to present the conditions of joint-rulership with Christ, but especially to show that the Church is called to watch for such joint-rulership with Christ.

4. RELATION OF CHRIST'S COMING TO THE BELIEVER'S BODY

We are now brought right up to the great apostolic revelation regarding the bodily regeneration, resurrection and glorification of believers at Christ's coming.

There are certain expressions used by the Apostles, which are evidently weighty, but which wear the aspect of mystery and seem perplexing until we understand the profound truth of our coming bodily salvation. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin [offering] unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). Are we then waiting for salvation until He appears? Certainly! "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24, 25). "Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:5). "Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (v. 13).

Further passages will explain this salvation, which is now in hope only and not in fruition, as that which is to be brought to our physical man by our Lord at His coming. He is to become "our Life" to the body as He already is to the spirit.

2 Cor. 5:1-5: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

From this passage we learn most important facts, not altogether new, but in a fresh and enlarged edition.

Our present bodily tabernacle is an "earthly house,"—constituted after an earthly manner; it is of the dust, and its breath of life is in our nostrils. Our house "eternal in the heavens" will be no less a bodily structure, and it will be identical with the present "house"; but it will be "a building of God," a "house which is from heaven"; i. e., constructed of imperishable material, with its breath of life in the immortal Spirit of Jesus. Consequently, what is now mortal of our organism will then be abundantly immortal, "swallowed up of life." The Holy Spirit in His present relations to us physically is "the earnest" of this bodily reconstitution. This is further explained in Rom. 8:11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." That is, the Spirit intimates to us our coming bodily life by the healings and revivings which He gives to those who trust and prove Jesus as the present, living Healer.

The time and manner of the marvellous transformation of body is explained in 1 Cor. 15:51-53: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This is given by Paul explicitly as the disclosure of a "mystery," a secret. The time of this unparalleled event is that of the resurrection of the saints at Christ's coming,—"they that are Christ's at his coming" (v. 23). But it is noticeable that the event includes the bodily transformation of living saints also.

This change, by which that which is now mortal of

us shall be swallowed up of life,—whether through death and resurrection or not—emphasizes the literal reality of bodily regeneration as well as of resurrection. We have many inspiring statements which set forth the type of the regenerated body. 1 Cor. 15:42-49: “So also is the resurrection of the body. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. . . . And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” Phil. 3:20, 21: “For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” 1 John 3:2: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Col. 3:4: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory,” or in glorified condition. It is evident that the bodily change is one into the present bodily image of Christ; and some literal conception of its character is to be formed from the account of the transfiguration of His body upon the mount.

The vast significance of all this is set forth to our wider intelligence and to our amazement in Rom. 8:

16-23: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature [creation, or the creature-world] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature [material and animal creation] was made subject to vanity [perishability, mortality], not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

This passage shows, that it pertains to a child of God to be an heir of God and, on condition of fellowship in suffering at present, to be a joint-heir with Christ; and that to this joint-heirship with Christ belongs the glorification of body with Him. It also shows that this bodily glorification of the sons of God is to be revealed to the creature-world to which the sons of God now belong as fellow-mortals. For this manifestation of the glorified children of God with Christ at His return the whole perishing creation is waiting in highest anticipation; for the creature-world about us is unwillingly enduring its perishability, having fallen into the same with the first Adam as its head. Yet all the physical world, to which we as bodily beings belong, lives in the sure "hope" of restoration from mortal bondage "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"; their appear-

ing along with Christ at His second coming will be the signal and the sample of the coming regeneration of the whole creature-world. Now believers, although having "the earnest," or the "firstfruits," of their bodily regeneration already through the Spirit in His quickening indwelling in our mortal bodies, are yet left still to "groan within ourselves" in sympathetic mortality, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." We have a salvation now,—the spiritual; but we hope for another salvation,—the bodily. So also, we have an adoption now,—the spiritual; but we wait for another "adoption"—the physical, the bodily. And what we are waiting for in that respect is being eagerly expected by the whole perishable creation.

This great truth of our coming bodily change into Christ's glorious bodily likeness at His coming is impressively intimated in 2 Thess. 1:7-10, which passage closes with this marvellous revelation: "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." So realistic is the matter, so wondrous, that the Lord Himself is actually to be seen mirrored and multiplied in His own bodily glory and beauty through the forms of His glorified followers.

It is not to be understood that we are implying that bodily resurrection was unknown in Hebrew Scripture. Job clearly affirmed the faith of his resurrection: "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands" (14:14, 15). "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (19:25-27). Jesus explained

in Luke 20:37, 38, that God's confession of Himself as "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," implied that those patriarchs were still, although disembodied, in living communion with Him as the God, not of dead-and-gone beings, but of living beings; and that that fact carried with it the certainty of their resurrection and of all resurrection. David bore testimony to resurrection, not only Christ's (Acts 2:31), but his own also (Psa. 71:20): "Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." Daniel was assured of his resurrection to participate appropriately in the times of the restored kingdom of Israel (12:13): "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." And Daniel was given the prophecy of the resurrection of many sainted Israelites at the same time of the end (12:2): "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some [those then raised] to everlasting life, and some [those left for future resurrection] to shame and everlasting contempt." These intimations of this great truth might be traced out indefinitely in the Old Testament.

And in the Gospels Jesus foretold the resurrection of all men at His call (John 5:28, 29): "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life [the first resurrection]; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [the final resurrection]." Jesus thrice demonstrated resurrection in reawaking dead persons; He declared Himself to be the resurrection and the life (of the body); and He proved it by His own resurrection and the attending resurrection when "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints [of Israel] which slept [at Jerusa-

lem] arose, and came out of their graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matt. 27:52, 53).

And yet, what we have found in the Apostolic writings—for freshness, explicitness and fulness—is like a new revelation. And the main feature of this newness is the application of the subject to the Church as the whole body of believers, and its being focussed upon the personal appearing of Jesus Christ in glory as Himself the resurrection and the immortal life.

5. THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS

One notable passage has been reserved for this caption, because the passage includes a prophecy which amounts practically to an altogether new revelation,—that of the "rapture" of the Church. The bodily regeneration, resurrection and glorification of the saints is the occasion for the bodily translation of the Church to meet the returning Christ in the ether above this earth. Our passage is 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope [or, which have not the hope]. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

This testimony is so explicit, so graphic, so literalistic, as to leave room for no uncertainty or obscurity regarding the bodily awakening, resurrection and glorification of the saints. But it mainly reveals, with the most distinct declaration, that the risen saints, together with

the transformed living saints, are to be caught away in glory-cloud, as was the ascending Saviour, to meet with Jesus in the secret chambers of the skies before His public appearing in the earth. This revelation is given by Paul as new and fresh from the Lord by express word. It is presented as the great consolation to believers in being separated by death from fellow-believers; and this great event is held forth as the distinctive objective of Christian watching and waiting. And this expectancy is manifestly different—not only in sentiment and in motive, but also in point of time and of object—from that which was maintained through all preceding Scriptures. True, we can read it back into type and parable; but nowhere is it to be found before as a revelation, a prediction, a prophecy. We should, therefore, accord it full literal value.

And certainly there is an unspeakable value and marvel in this picture. The minds of men were amazed at the reviving of the dead as individuals by Jesus. A few such occurrences startled the old dispensation. What must Enoch's translation have meant to the antediluvian world! How magnificent the departure of Elijah! Too sacred for common gaze it was. We little appreciate the thrills of emotion, the dazzling flashes of illumination experienced by the Disciples because of Jesus' resurrection, and when they witnessed His ascension. Even the report of it shook the Roman Empire from center to circumference. But what will be the effect of the world-wide opening of the graves of all saints in response to the shout of Jesus from heaven and to the trump of God? What will be the amazement over the fact—if not the spectacle—of the assemblage of the resurrected saints on the earth, to be joined by the multitude of living ones, "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and all together swept away in the clouds of glory into hiding with Jesus in the sky, at His place of tarrying for a little before descending visibly to the earth?

We have already anticipated a noticeable feature of the revelation just treated of: it discloses to us that the return of our Lord is to be divided into two stages, the first of which—the preliminary coming, only as far as to our skies above, there to tarry a season—had never been disclosed before. It is with this stage of Christ's coming that the Church is first and directly concerned, and no others are so concerned. It is true that Daniel's vision of the occupying of the skies by the Ancient of Days (7:9-14) involves this stage of our Saviour's return; but it is not there presented in any such setting or with any inkling of the Church's special interest in it.

6. THE MAN OF SIN, OR THE ANTI-CHRIST

The new aspect of Christ's coming treated of in the previous section is again definitely mentioned by Paul in 2 Thess. 2:1: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him." Here are the two stages of Christ's coming again, the comprehensive "coming," and the special preliminary "gathering together unto him." Here, however, the distinction is made the basis of reckoning for important associated occurrences which are presented in verses 2-12. This group of events, although connected with our Lord's return, yet clusters especially about an opposing personage, who, as the passage shows, shall have his day between the two stages of Christ's coming before mentioned.

This personage has been made familiar to us in Hebrew prophecy, especially by Daniel, who described him as "the little horn" (Chapters 7 and 8), the "king of fierce countenance" (8:23), the "prince that shall come" (9:26), and as "the king [that] shall do according to his will" (11:36). But Paul's picture is largely different in standpoint and in details, while revealing a person of the same character. Jesus hinted at this person in His words to the Jews: "if another

shall come in his own name; him ye will receive" (John 5: 43). And the person in question is he whose acquaintance we make under the name of "Anti-Christ" first through the Apostle John (1 John 2: 18): "Little children, . . . ye have heard that Anti-Christ shall come."

The passage in question (2 Thess. 2: 2-12) follows, and some very important points of new revelation will be given special attention.

"2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth [taketh his seat] in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God [representing himself to be God]. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let [prevent or hinder], until he [the hindering cause] be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

1. The time of this person's ascendancy is to lie between the two stages of Christ's coming. The passage shows that the policy of iniquity; i. e., of Satan's evil workings, is until this "Wicked" one's day a policy of "mystery," of concealment, of hidden wiles and public secrecy; whereas, this policy will be exactly reversed through the appearing of this "Wicked." But it is shown also that his revelation cannot occur until that which all along till then has prevented is taken out of the way. What is that?

It will be remembered that Jesus gave His followers "power . . . over all the power of the enemy" (Lu. 10:19), and that He said of the Church, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). This shows that the public ascendancy of iniquity is impossible while the victorious Church of Christ remains in the earth in militant array. But our passage proceeds from the standpoint of "our gathering together unto Him" (v. 1). So that it seems plain that the yet unraptured Church is what withholdeth, "that he [the 'man of sin'] might be revealed in his time" (v. 6). (That the masculine pronoun is used in verse 7 is no real objection: for the translation might be he, she, or it, according to the translator's conception of the meaning.) Of course, it is Christ in His Church by the Holy Spirit that exercises the intimidating power over iniquity; but it is impossible to conceive of Christ, or of the Spirit's being "taken out of the way," or even of His leaving the world without His further presence and operating power. Just as for a limited season during Jesus's first advent satanic forces were given their "hour" and unhindered "power" (Luke 22:53), so will there be this considerable epoch of unrestrained satanic sway through that "Wicked," in the days preceding Christ's display of sweeping triumph. But from this awful time—the time of unparalleled "tribulation" with which we have been made familiar in Hebrew prophecy—the Church of Pentecostal power will be kept by removal to her Head in the sky. Indeed, this awful time could not occur while the Church remained. As we have, then, seen that the time of the "son of perdition" follows the first stage of Christ's coming,—after the puissant Church has been called up to meet Him in the heavens—so, it is expressly revealed in this passage, shall "that Wicked" be brought to his end by the second and final stage of the coming: "whom the

Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (v. 8).

2. The awful progress of evil in connection with the Anti-Christ's career is vividly, although very briefly, described.

(1) Apostasy, "a falling away" (v. 3). This is evidently an unparalleled religious declension, an apostasy from the true faith. Intimations of, or perhaps preliminaries to, this apostasy are mentioned in several places by Paul,—1 Tim. 4:1-31; 2 Tim. 3:1-9, 13; 4:3, 4. It is easy to see that, under the combined influence of a translated Church and the beginnings of Anti-Christ's sway, an appalling spiritual landslide might and naturally would occur.

(2) Desecration. Verse 4 describes "that man of sin" come to the full exposure of himself: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Here is extreme defiance of God and self-assumption of deity. He will put the matter to concrete illustration and effect by taking his seat in the very Holy of Holies, with personal claim to deity and universal worship. This is without doubt the same thing referred to by Jesus as "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel," (12:11), which shall "stand in the Holy place" (Matt. 24:15). It must refer to a temple yet to be built by the impenitent Jews in Jerusalem before the Lord's coming; for no other kind of a temple or place for a temple is recognized in the Scripture as "the temple of God" on earth.

(3) Deception. The daring, sacrilegious claims, and the self-deifying entry of Anti-Christ into the very temple of Jehovah, will have most commanding support apparently. For Anti-Christ's coming is to be "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (v. 9). But thank God! there will be such a

manifest lie in it all, that the "strong delusion" shall depend for success upon the "deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish"; and God will allow this, "that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (vs. 10-12).

Such will be the situation which the Lord's glorious appearing will find prevailing upon the earth and which, like a flash of lightning, His Epiphany will bring to its appropriate termination.

CHAPTER III.

PRACTICAL EFFECT UPON BELIEVERS OF THE HOPE AND PROSPECT OF CHRIST'S COMING

IN VIEW of the foregoing survey of the special vision of the Lord's Coming given in the Apostolical letters, it will be found appropriate to gather up the practical applications the Apostles make of the matter to our minds and hearts. And we are at once struck that no such wealth or force of injunction is to be found in previous Scriptures relative to the appearing of the Son of God. Especially is it noticeable that there is nothing presented of a threatening character. The many scattered injunctions may be grouped under several heads.

1. PREPARATION FOR PRESENTATION AT HIS COMING

The Saviour's own aim concerning the Church has ever been, "That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). For our encouragement it is said, "He is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). We are to follow the same aim: "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every man may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:9, 10). And this is to be the great aim of the true helper to believers: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also

will do it" (1 Thess. 5: 23, 24). "That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1: 28, 29). "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Thess. 2: 19). We have only to remind ourselves of what a great event it is in the life of any one outside princely classes to secure a presentation before an earthly king. The engagement is made long before, and the greatest forethought and anxious pains are taken to be fit for that supreme moment of face to face meeting with the sovereign. Should not the prospect of presentation before the eternal King of glory command the believer's life-long preparation and the Christian minister's most faithful oversight of souls under his care?

2. HOLY LIVING IN VIEW OF CHRIST'S COMING

This is not essentially different from the foregoing, only it is applied more directly to the believer himself in the way of pressing injunction. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory [or glorified form]. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3: 4, 5). "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3: 3). "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, . . . even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1: 9, 10). "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave him-

self for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:11-14). "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13). This exhortation, to due spiritual preparation for our Lord's coming, borrows its force from what is expressed in the words, "seeing that ye look for such things" (2 Pet. 3:14). This calls our attention closely to preceding verses, in which we will find an important and practically new prophecy reaching far beyond our Lord's coming. We will, therefore, make a study of the entire passage (2 Pet. 3:1-14).

Verses 1, 2: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." Peter emphasizes the need which he felt in writing both his letters for putting his readers on the alert regarding the Lord's coming. Of course, this includes his readers down to the very last days.

Verses 3, 4: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Peter states that his reason for trying to keep the minds of believers stirred up about this matter was, that in the last days the idea of Christ's coming would be hooted at by atheistical scoffers on the ground of the immutability of the existing order of creation.

Verses 5-7: "For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." This scoffing argument is refuted by reference to the catastrophe of judgment visited by the Lord upon the Noachian world, and the argument is pressed that even so another catastrophe is awaiting heavens and earth; namely, not another flood of waters, but a renovation by fire.

Verses 8-10: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Here it is urged that time—even millenniums—does not impress the Lord's mind as it does ours, and that long delay on Christ's part does not render His coming doubtful; neither does it indicate slackness on His part, seeing that He only waits for the sake of the salvation of the most possible.

Verses 11-13: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Here the exhortation to godliness in view of a coming catastrophe, brings us to see that the end in vision now is not the Lord's pre-millennial coming, but a "new heavens and

and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Of course, this great reorganization of the whole Biblical field of creation—our heavens and earth—by a catastrophe compared to which history finds no analogy since the Flood, is called into consideration by the claims of those scoffers that Jesus cannot be coming to establish anything new, seeing that "all things continue [have continued unbrokenly] as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Now this vivid description of the work of fire, to which our heavens and earth are to be subjected, is not to be taken as predicting an annihilation, but only a final and effectual purgation, by which everything belonging to the times of unrighteousness and mortality shall be forever eliminated from our heavens and earth. The antediluvian world "perished" (v. 6); yet it was not annihilated, but only renovated and organized anew. So the strong expressions used in describing the fire-renovation in prospect are not to be taken as implying annihilation; for the result is "new heavens and a new earth,"—not other heavens and another earth, but the former made new, restored to the original, unfallen, incorruptible, holy state. Those who practically believe this will be following after holiness now themselves and so hastening unto that day.

We have here, then, the first descriptive prediction of the final restoration of earth and skies to an everlasting pure and imperishable condition. This great end was predicted in bare fact by Isaiah. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (65: 17-19). Here God's purpose to create new heavens and a new earth

is made the pledge to Israel and the type of the recreation of Jerusalem which He will finally accomplish. But it is not to be another Jerusalem, neither is it to be other heavens and another earth in the absolute and identical sense. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain" (66:22). That is, just as the reconstituted heavens and earth shall be immutable after the fire-renovation, so shall the finally restored Israel enjoy immutable relations with Jehovah.

Further revelation of the postmillennial culmination of Christ's work of redemption is to be found in Eph. 1:8-12. Verse 8 introduces as among the "all spiritual blessings," with which the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us, that of the gift, out of His abounding grace, of "all wisdom and prudence" having made known unto us "the mystery of His will." This mystery is stated to be something which the Father "hath purposed in himself"; and it is explained as consisting of His gathering "together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven [the heavens, R. V.], and which are on earth."

This becomes very plain and very glorious as soon as we note the precise localization of this consummation,—"the heavens . . . and the earth." This means exactly our mundane sphere of earth and skies. Scripture betrays no inkling of the need for a gathering together in one in Christ of all things anywhere else; and the whole subject of Scripture is the redemption of the apostate earth and skies by Christ and their perfect restoration by Him to the original purpose of their creation. All things in the part of the universe centering in this earth were created by Christ and committed into His hands as Lord thereof; and He has been entrusted with the "times," or ages, required to work out the redemption of the same, when all in earth and skies shall be

evermore harmonized in Him and swayed by Him. The real sense of the expression "gather together in one all things in Christ" is aptly expressed by the translation "*rehead* all things in Christ." A rival head of this sphere in God's universe appeared when Satan revolted from the divine sovereignty of the Son of God over him, carrying with him the forces of the skies and crushing the earth into chaos under his feet. Even after the restoration of the earth to order, beauty and useful purpose, Satan slyly undermined the headship of the Son of God over the renewed earth by seducing Adam, the Lord's earthly vice-regent. Thereupon was undertaken by the Son of God as Saviour the stupendous scheme of the redemption of this lost province of earth and skies to their original relation to God Almighty through the Son, as a sphere where the will of God shall be done as it is in "heaven itself." Verses 10, 11 add the practical and inspiring revelation that, in order "that we should be to the praise of His glory," we are to participate as inheritors with Him, not alone in the millennial reign, but also in this immeasurably more glorious and this never-ending reign with Him over "the new heavens and the new earth" in "the dispensation of the fulness of times."

3. BOLD PROFESSION OF JESUS AS KING OF THE JEWS

1 Tim. 6:11-15: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which

in his time he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Why is Christ's "good confession" (the same as "profession") "before Pontius Pilate" mentioned here? It is because the "good profession" of Timothy "before many witnesses" was the same; namely, that Jesus is the King of the Jews, that He is coming as such, and that that king of the Jews is coming as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." It shows that we need to have this truth in our understanding and in our conviction, and boldly to witness to it in the world. It is a testimony that is needed by the powers of this evil age, and it will mean much to us in the day of Christ's coming in power to have been faithful to this testimony. The truths of the deity of Jesus Christ and His coming as King of the Jews are like the two arms of the cross; for Jesus was condemned to the cross on these two confessions, and by these two,—and not by either one alone—are we fully crucified to this world with Him, and this world to us.

4. JOYOUS ENDURANCE OF TRIALS IN VIEW OF JESUS' COMING

Heb. 10:36, 37: "For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Patience in doing the will of God at any cost is sustained by the certainty of Christ's coming to fulfil the promise of God's reward for well-doing. 1 Pet. 1:6, 7: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Even unfailing, ever-brightening faith is the supreme trust to be kept intact

unto that day. 1 Pet. 4:12,12: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Through suffering He entered into glory, and He is to return in glory to rule where He suffered; and the same path is appointed for us,—there is no other way of walking "in His steps."

5. COMFORT IN SEPARATION BY DEATH FROM LOVED ONES IN THE FAITH

1 Thess. 4:18: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." We have already treated fully of the context of which this verse is the conclusion and application, the passage which most fully describes the rapture of the Church. The Thessalonian believers had been taught of the Lord's coming at their first hearing and reception of the Gospel; but their understanding was imperfect, and evidently the first deaths among them created a great shock and perplexity. But the rapture, when deceased and living believers should be united forever, was made the word of comfort for them and for us. This is emphasized still further in 5:10, 11: "Who died for us that, whether we wake [are living] or sleep [are dead], we should live together [in reunited company] with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."

6. FORBEARANCE AND LOVE ONE TO ANOTHER

Rom. 14:10: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Ah, what restraint upon judgment and contempt toward a brother a practical vision of the day of His

impartial and tolerant judgment is designed to exercise! Heb. 10:24, 25: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." How common it is for first considerations to provoke us to the loss of love and good works toward our brother; but here we are exhorted to take such prayerful consideration as to be incited to love and good works toward one another; to be incited to continue assembling ourselves together, rather than dropping apart; to be incited to exhort one another, rather than to fall into recrimination; and all this, "so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." 1 Thess. 3:12, 13: "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Holiness is meetness for presence before God at Christ's coming; but holiness depends upon brotherly love, so that love is to be pursued in view of the coming, in order that we may be meet for that coming. 1 Pet. 4:7, 8: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover a multitude of sins." In God's view "the end of all things is at hand" all through this dispensation; and the believer's heartfelt attitude toward every brother is to be that which one would feel it ought to be at the very last. Jas. 5:9: "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." How embarrassing and distressing for Jesus' appearing to catch one cherishing a grudge against a brother, however great the provocation!

7. LOVE TO JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF AS THE MIGHTY ATTRACTION TO HIS COMING

1 Cor. 16:22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathama Maran-atha." This last compound word means The Lord Cometh; and the verse shows that the only preparation for His coming is love of Him. 2 Tim. 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul's love of Him explains his love of His appearing. 1 John 2:28: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Of course, the abiding in Him is a matter of constancy of love. Col. 3:1-4: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." All this means the intensest unity in love with the Saviour, by which life is lived in common with Him through the Spirit. Phil. 3:7-11: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." No such

intense expression of personal love of Jesus is to be found elsewhere, and it all culminates upon the practical preparation for the fullest participation with Him in the future things to be introduced by His coming. 1 Cor. 11:26: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The early disciples called the Supper the Agape, the feast of love. It was designed to be the time of fresh, full inflaming of love to Jesus and to one another for His sake. But Christ said that the Supper was not only a celebration of the past sacrifice on Calvary, but also a continually repeated expression of loving anticipation of His coming.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH AGE IN RELATION TO THE SUSPENSION AND TO THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

THERE remains a body of Apostolical Scripture having prophetic bearing, which has not yet been dealt with, and which discusses most impressively and profitably the subject of this chapter. This Scripture is Rom. 9-11. It need not be fully quoted, although the reader is asked to follow the entire text carefully as we progress.

The tragic import to Paul of Israel's present state, and the gravity of that state in its spiritual significance, is voiced by him in 9:1-5: "I say the truth in Christ; I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." This really expresses God's feeling of high respect for Israel and of unutterable grief over Israel's alienated and deposed condition.

However, it is interposed in vs. 6-24, that the saving mercy of God toward every spiritually disposed member of Abraham's seed is unsuspended. For while, generally speaking, Israel now constitutes "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" upon which God, after "enduring with much long suffering," is now showing "His wrath"

and making "His power known" (v. 22), yet He is likewise pursuing the purpose "that He might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory" (v. 23). These "vessels of mercy," however, are described as "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles" (v. 24); i. e., the whole body of the Church. This Gospel age is not exclusively a Gentile age spiritually speaking; it is, however, especially such, but only because God, in His infinite mercy, must seek a people. The words of Hosea (2: 23), which primarily refer to God's purpose of getting back for Himself at last His rejected people, are here applied to the present Gentile people of Christ (vs. 25, 26): "As he hath said in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God." Vs. 27-33 explain that the reason why Israel is now in the background and the Gentiles at the front, is because but a remnant of Israel are attaining, or will attain, unto "the righteousness of faith,"—the great mass following after righteousness only "by the works of the law" and not by faith in Jesus Christ—while "the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith" (v. 30).

In Chapter 10 the divine longing for Israel's salvation is reiterated, especially in view of their religious strivings (vs. 1, 2). These strivings, however, are the determined effort to establish righteousness in self and not in Christ, who is the goal of "the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (vs. 3, 4). Even Moses himself, the giver of the law, taught faith in Christ as the only possible way of life (vs. 5-10). But this opens the door wide to all Gentiles, even as the Hebrew Scrip-

tures themselves always teach; "For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (vs. 11-13).

Moreover, the very same principles, which rendered it urgent for grace to be brought diligently and effectually to the knowledge of all Israelites of old, apply likewise to the urgency of giving the Gospel to the whole Gentile world now, especially as what had come to failure among the Jews is having a time of success among the Gentiles (vs. 14-21). "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (v. 15), applies to present-day Gentile evangelism as well as it did to old-time Hebrew evangelism. And who can help sympathizing with Isaiah in voicing for God the words which are just as applicable to the Gospel-age,—"I was found of them that sought me not; and I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me" (v. 20),—when he was also compelled to complain for God of Israel: "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (v. 21).

But the question now taken up in Chapter 11 is, "Hath God cast away [forever] his people [Israel]?" (v. 1). The answer is decisive, and a signal proof of the answer stands right at hand: "God forbid! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (v. 1). It is reaffirmed, "God hath not cast away [beyond recovery] His people which he foreknew" (v. 2). The argument is a *reduction ad absurdum*—How can God have cast away, how could He cast away, a people chosen to be His with absolute foreknowledge of them from beginning to end, for better or worse?

The Apostle then declares that there is a remnant of

the true seed in Israel still, even as there was in the days of Elijah, when such apostasy prevailed as to lead the prophet to suppose that he stood alone for God (vs. 2-5). But this remnant is a "remnant according to the election of grace" (v. 5). This excludes works; and it disappoints and denies those—the mass of Israel—who sought and who still seek by works (vs. 6, 7). Indeed this bent to works is itself the highest sin against "the God of all grace," and it incurs the judgment from God of such blindness, hardness and bondage as is seen now in obdurate Israel (vs. 8-10). But their stumbling involves a better end than merely their fall; for occasion is furnished by their fall for carrying salvation broadcast to the Gentiles (v. 11). And this is gracious even toward the present pouting Israel; for by the provocation of jealousy they also are induced to embrace the blessed Gospel (v. 11).

And as to the restoration of Israel at last,—Why, God is under double constraint to restore them; for "If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness! . . . For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (vs. 12, 15). Glorious age this!—the age of the reconciling of the world to God by the preaching of the Gospel of accomplished reconciliation. But far more glorious is to be the age of restored Israel—a veritable resurrection age.

And now something amazing follows. "For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are also the branches" (v. 16). The old-time Israel, the firstfruits of the seed of Abraham, was holy; then the whole race of all after-time is holiness to the Lord. Or, changing the figure, the Israel of old was the root and was holy; therefore, all after branches of posterity must be holy unto God. The entire people was everlastingly chosen of God. "And if some of the

branches be broken off, and thou [Christian Gentiles], being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee" (vs. 17, 18).

How plainly this shows that the Gospel age is spiritually a continuation of the Hebrew age,—in fact, its ingraft; that the Church is not a new thing spiritually, but that it is the old stock of the true Israel simply reinforced in fruit-bearing by new grafts from the Gentile stock at a time when the natural branches had become fruitless. Let us, then, not overlook the fact that the root of the Church of this age is the spiritual stock of Israel of the former age. Of course, the truth of the matter is that that stock was the Son of God Himself, who was the life of the faithful Israelite as well before the incarnation as He is of the faithful Christian since the incarnation. Even when He became man, He "took on Him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16). We need to remember that He who is "our life" is a "rod out of the stem of Jesse" (Isa. 11:11).

Paul goes on to enforce the caution not to boast against the severed branches of Israel, on the ground that they were severed for unbelief, while we occupy their place only by faith; and he urges that we are just as liable to be cut off for pride and failure to abide thankfully in God's goodness toward us (vs. 19-22).

Still further, their end has not yet come. "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted [back] in; for God is able to graff them in again" (v. 23). Why not, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature [an inferior scion into a superior stock] into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (v. 24). Here again it is implied that the Church is not spiritually a new thing

in the world, but a spiritual descendant; but it is also shown that its descent is not in Gentile line, but in the line of Israel.

And now the mystery is fully disclosed: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (v. 25). This is addressed to the Gentile believer, and it still warns him against conceit of self above Israel. It refutes the all too common assumption that Israel is in world-calling dead and gone forever, and that the Church has superseded Israel permanently. The truth is, the Church is the supplement to Israel's temporary blindness, to last only until the Gentiles have been given their full Gospel opportunity. "And so shall all Israel be saved" (v. 26). Of course this is meant in the sense already so familiar to us,—in the sense of the entire remnant to be left after God's indignation has been fully spent upon the faithless nation. "As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (vs. 26, 27). Here the return of Jesus is in the familiar sense of its relation to the nation of Israel. How different it is from the meaning Jesus' coming has in relation to the Church!

There is added a magnificent summary of the whole previous unfolding of the mystery of Israel's suspension and restoration in relation to the Church. "As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might

have mercy upon all" (vs. 28-32). For the present Gospel age God is treating Israel as an enemy, but it is for the sake of the Church; while, as a matter of a chosen relation to Him, Israel is still beloved for the fathers' sakes. For, as in all God's gifts and callings, so in Israel's case, "the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent" (1 Sam. 15:29). But He is only working out His wonder-plot of grace toward all mankind.

Therefore the Apostle leaves deeply impressed upon our minds the grandeur of this scheme of divine grace for a lost world: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (vs. 33-36).

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH OF THE AGES

THE proposition to be discussed in this chapter is that the Church of Jesus Christ—in the spiritual sense, as His mystical body—is not a comparatively modern creation, belonging only to this age, but has been in process of formation and increase throughout all human history. The proof of this proposition will be presented from the Scriptures along two general lines.

1. The spiritual pedigree of the Church of this age runs back into ancient Israel of the former age.

This assertion will very likely surprise many readers and will possibly provoke dissent at first. Note the peculiar inversion! At the beginning of this age for long it was almost impossible for Hebrew believers to accord full spiritual equality with themselves to Gentile believers; now for long it has been unusual for Christians to recognize the saints of the Old Testament times as being of the same spiritual body with ourselves.

On the question of the relation of the Church of this age to ancient Israel an examination of Romans 11 will prove very helpful and very conclusive.

In verse 1 Israel is called God's people, and that is all that we are. The question is asked whether God has cast away His people Israel; i. e., utterly and forever. This is denied in v. 2. Israel has been set aside only temporarily and is still the Lord's chosen people. Moreover, a remnant even of these has been numbered with the saved all through this age, just in so far as they have embraced salvation by grace and have not sought it by works (vs. 5, 6). Furthermore, God has been making good use of Israel's present loss of its national calling to bring more abundant salvation to the Gentile

world (v. 11). This age of Jewish exclusion is the richest age spiritually the world has ever seen, especially for the Gentiles (v. 12).

This is not, however, because the Gentiles have anything to boast of above the Jews. Contrariwise, "Salvation is of the Jews," Jesus Himself said. And Paul practically declares the same thing in the chapter under consideration. The superior blessedness of the Gospel dispensation is due to the release unto the world of the treasures of grace previously held in custody and not faithfully administered by the Jews. And the best age has not even yet come; neither will it come so long as the Jews remain ostracised. Not through some new custodian of the oracles of God will the world seek most fully after God; when Israel shall be restored to her true place and come really into her "fulness," far greater enrichment will come to the world in general; and even for Israel at present, salvation is more active among them out of sheer emulation than it would otherwise be (v. 14). A restoration, however, awaits her which will be a veritable resurrection from the dead as a nation (v. 15). And this is true to the principle that, as the firstfruits is holy, so also is the whole lump; as the root is holy, so also are the branches, v. 16. Israel is by divine calling and covenant a people forever holy unto the Lord. The temporary excision of some branches argues nothing to the contrary. Old Israel was a holy firstfruit offering and a holy root; the lump, therefore, and the branches, remain holy. Israel only awaits the time of re-instatement.

Therefore, the case of the Church—as a spiritual body, more especially of Gentile believers—is not the case of planting a new root, or of presenting a new firstfruit offering; it is the case of grafting into the old root, of reaping a harvest like unto the firstfruits offering. The Church is not a new genus, but a new dispensational species of the old genus. Dispensationally speaking,

the Church is a new and distinct religious order, but spiritually the Church is the lineal descendant of ancient Israel; "Thou bearest not the root, but the *root thee*" (v. 18). Hence, the Church, spiritually considered as the body of Christ, antedates Antioch,—where the believers were first called Christians—antedates Pentecost, antedates Christ's advent; in fact, the Church embraces all Hebrew believers from Abraham down.

But the chapter which we are considering implies even a remoter pedigree still for the Church. What does it mean that Israel is called a good olive tree and the Gentile people a wild olive tree (v. 24)? It can mean nothing less than that there is a genus Olive Tree back of Israel and common to the whole race, and that Israel was a cultivated species of Olive Tree, while the rest of mankind simply ran wild. We are thus brought by irresistible logic, as well as by the consistent testimony of all Scripture, to see that the Church dispensational is but the latest manifestation of the Church mystical, which is co-existent with the race and which embraces a common, spiritual type of souls of all ages and peoples.

And how could it be otherwise? We have only to remember that man was originally created in Christ, God's only begotten Son, who is the image and likeness of God. By disobedience Adam fell out of life in Christ; but he was re-born into Him by grace through faith in Him as Redeemer, God's Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world." And the Son of God, as we have already seen, has ever been seeking and saving "that which was lost," whether before His incarnation or since. We have seen that John 1:12, 13 describes how the family of God, the body of Christ, was growing out of the world in general and out of Israel in particular before Jesus appeared: "But as many as received him [the pre-incarnate Christ], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed in his name."

The question actually discussed in the Scriptures is not whether the Old Testament saints are to be numbered in one spiritual body with us, but whether we are so fortunate as to be numbered with them. It is ignorance and pride, the inveterate tendency to religious exclusiveness, that raises the former question.

In the writer's hearing a famous holiness evangelist preached one day a sermon depicting the most marvelous aspects of the "second blessing," which he stoutly taught was never known before the day of Pentecost. On the very next day he preached an equally remarkable discourse upon Scriptural samples of "instantaneous entire sanctification"; but he chose all six of his samples from the Old Testament characters. He was right in his instinct, wrong in his theory. Did not Jesus say: "That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 8:11)? The place to be occupied by those patriarchs was not questioned; the real revelation was that multitudes,—represented by that Roman centurion—from all quarters of the globe and of the ages should be found with those Hebrew file-leaders.

The whole situation is expressed most tersely and luminously in Heb. 11:39, 40: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The evident meaning of this is, that the Hebrew saints of old fully won by their faith the right to the "better thing," but their inheritance of it was delayed sufficiently for us also to be included. One promise underlies both dispensations, because the "better thing" of our dispensation was necessary to bring the promise of their dispensation to its fulfilment. Hence Abraham is "the father of us all" and "the father of many nations" with respect to evangelical and saving faith.

This unity in the universality and the totality of believers is the great theme of Paul's letter to the Ephesians; it is that which he calls "the mystery," which Jesus Christ "by revelation . . . made known unto" him; "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel" (Eph. 5:6). It is a mistake to consider that this unity of Jews and Gentiles in the "same body" dates first from this new dispensation; it is not the fact of this unity that is of modern date, it is only the fully unveiled disclosure of the fact. The fact was before held in "mystery,"—"hid in God" (v. 9)—but now it is given "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery."

This "mystery" was divulged even in the prophetic words of the high-priest Caiaphas, who prophesied "that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11:51, 52). Jesus also expressed the same fact of the universal unity of believers in the words: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Does not this clearly show that Israel of old was a fold of Christ's sheep, but also that it was not the entire fold? Now "the mystery" is cleared up; back of all folds is the original, universal fold, which is now made known as the one Church, the body of Christ Jesus.

2. There is another line of Scriptural representation on which we may follow up this truth in a most helpful way.

It has already been shown that man was originally created in Christ, the Son of God; there was a mutual

indwelling of Adam in Christ and of Christ in Adam, illustrating from the origin of man's existence the words of Jesus, "Ye in me, and I in you." Regeneration restores for fallen man this mutual indwelling; and this it is that constitutes membership in the Church, in whatever age or dispensation. But it is also a familiar fact that all members of Christ are members of one another, and that all together they constitute an organized spiritual body of Christ. This is what constitutes the Church; and the Church in this sense embraces all spiritual members of Christ of all the ages.

This truth of the divine residence in believing souls individually and in collective organization holds a very prominent place in Scripture; indeed, it may be considered in a sense as the thread which binds all the Bible up in one. Such is the love and goodness of God, that He earnestly seeks to find habitation in His human creature. God thus seeks to share the ineffable communion of the Trinity with His human children. "I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you, . . . if a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:20, 23). Even in external relationship God in Christ early showed His longing to be intimately in the midst of a people of His own. This was the meaning of the old time Tabernacle of Israel. In giving the direction through Moses to Israel in the wilderness, to bring an offering of the materials for the construction of the Tabernacle, the Son of God explained His reason for so doing thus: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. . . . And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat . . . where I will meet you, and speak there unto thee" (Ex. 25:8, 22; 29:42). This Tabernacle was a type of the body in which Christ Jesus "dwelt [or tabernacled] among us" (John 1:14). The Tabernacle subsequently gave place to the Temple;

but the same idea is to be understood as pertaining to the Temple.

Hence the figure of the Temple is applied to the believer as the holy abiding and communing place of God in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, . . . What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? . . . Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; 6: 19; 2 Cor. 6: 16).

But it is especially in the spiritual corporate aspect of all believers that the various figures expressing indwelling are employed. The Epistle to the Ephesians, which more fully than any other Scripture discusses the unity of all believers of all the ages, is rich in these figures. The first chapter employs the figure of the "body." After showing how the body consists of all "the saints" without difference between Jew and Gentile, the Apostle portrays the supreme exaltation of Christ over all powers, from which position God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head unto the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (1: 22, 23). In the second chapter the unity of all saints "in Christ Jesus" is described under the figures of a "common-wealth" (or body politic, as we would say), of a "household of God," of a "building fitly framed together," of a "holy temple in the Lord," and of "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (2: 12, 19-22). In the third chapter the "mystery" of the unity of all believers—a mystical reality not first constituted in this age, but only "now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (3: 5)—employs the figure of "the whole *family* in heaven and earth" (v. 15).

All these figures carry the thought in them of the

divine presence within; but it is more especially the figure of the "building" or "holy temple," which prompts the representation of the spiritual construction of all believers into an "habitation of God through the Spirit." This is the conception belonging to that much-misapplied saying of John 14:2: "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you." The Father's house is to be understood as that "habitation of God" in the collective body of all believers of all time. And the "many mansions," therefore, are not places for believers to go and dwell in up in heaven when they die, but they are the many places or rooms of divine indwelling which Jesus is making for His Father in the saints themselves. Jesus' work on high is that of securing and preparing human souls for individual and collective "habitation of God through the Spirit." As if Jesus had said, "I go to prepare a place for each of you to fill in my Father's house as one of its 'mansions' or living rooms"! How far superior is this conception to the prevalent, somewhat selfish conception!

THE CHURCH AS THE CITY OF GOD

Now the city stands as the crowning achievement in the way of a human dwelling-place. It represents a multitude of residents, highly organized in municipal economy, enjoying an elaborate system of utilities and the highest, latest developments for comfort, refinement and privilege. It naturally follows that the conception of God's place of dwelling in the completed body of His glorified human children and saints, and which is embodied in the figure, "The City of God," should eclipse every other conception.

In Heb. 12:22 this city is called "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." But ye are come unto mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (vs. 22, 23). Apparently this means a heavenly locality; but the language is, "ye are come unto." Those addressed were still in the flesh and on the earth; and yet they were "come unto" all that is described. There is, therefore, no distinction of place intended—here and there; it is a spiritual city, a spiritual Jerusalem, consisting especially of "the general assembly and Church of the first-born."

This becomes clearer from Gal. 4:26: "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Certainly this sounds like a place and a structure on high; but it is all only "the mother of us all." This shows that this Jerusalem is wherever the children of God are, and that it consists of the whole family in heaven and earth. That is, the encompassing confines of this city are not local and territorial, but purely spiritual; the city, while being from above in creative and organizing power, yet in its spiritual locality and boundaries is to be found wherever there is any soul "born from above."

This city is mentioned again in Rev. 3:12: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name." Here are three names written upon the overcomer, one of which is that of "the city of . . . God, which is new Jerusalem." It seems evident that this is purely a spiritual conception, as in the case of the two other names; and this conception is in accord with that already brought forward,—the conception of an habitation of God of the highest spiritual rank. The verse before us first promises that the Philadelphian overcomer shall be a "pillar in

the temple of . . . God"; and it very appropriately promises also that he shall be branded with "the name of the city of . . . God." This signifies that God will take in him a superlative type of indwelling.

But the city of God here is not only denominated "new Jerusalem," but also described as that city "which cometh down out of heaven from God." This unmistakably identifies this city with the "holy city" of Rev. 21:2, 10. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. . . . And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Here we find full confirmation of the fact that the city which we have been considering is a purely spiritual habitation of God, the consummate and supremely glorious dwelling-place of God in believers. Verse 3 makes this evident by calling this city "new Jerusalem . . . the tabernacle of God . . . with men." But the most important and conclusive proof of it is found in v. 10. In v. 9 it is stated that one of the seven vial angels said to John, "Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife"; and in v. 10 the thing shown is described as "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Could it be made plainer that this "great city, the holy Jerusalem" is nothing else than the glorified Church of the ages called "the bride, the Lamb's wife" and depicted under the supreme figure of divine habitation, that of the city of God?

One more passage of great importance—especially in the light of the passage last considered—remains to be taken up in order at this point. This is Heb. 11:8-16: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

By faith, he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."

Note that Abraham is said to have acted like a foreigner and temporary sojourner in the Promised Land, because he dwelt there "in tabernacles [tents], with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." The reason for this pilgrim relation to the Promised Land is given in the words, "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (v. 10). Those ancient believers by their manner of life "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (v. 13). And such they were; "for they that say such things declare plainly [by their actions] that they seek a country" (v. 14). That is, even the land promised to them in the earth did not to their vision exhaust, or even mainly fill up, the promise. Had they been discontented thus to live,—merely tenting in the Promised Land—they could have returned to Haran,

or to Ur of the Chaldees. But No! "But now they desire a better country [better than their native land, better even than the Promised Land], that is, an heavenly" (v. 16). And as they lived, so "these all died in faith," literally, according to faith, in harmony with what they were seeing beyond sight. They saw something "afar off"; they "were persuaded"; they "embraced"; "they confessed." "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (v. 16).

In the light of what we have before seen, it here appears that the Hebrew patriarchs were governed in life and in death by the faith of being called to be constituent material of that spiritual "*City of God*," which He has been building for His radiant residence out of penitent and consecrated believers in all dispensations.

Finally, as a fully conclusive proof of the unity of God's spiritual habitation embracing children of His in both the old and the new dispensations, we may cite Heb. 3:1-6: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Note that the sphere of service of both Moses and Christ is here defined as "His house" (v. 2), that is, Christ's house; and Moses and Christ are likened to each other in point of faithfulness in their respective

offices in this house. But immediately a sharp contrast between the two is introduced with regard to their respective positions in this house (v. 3). The surprising thing here is that "this man" (Christ) is represented to be the builder of the house, while Moses is only a part of the house. The builder of this house is God in Christ,—“He that built all things.” See John 1:3, Col. 1:16. Now Moses had an office in this house, but only that of “a servant,” “but Christ as a son over his own house.” Christ, then, was building that house in the past, Moses was a part of it, and Moses was Christ’s servant in the building operations of his day. But note that believers of this dispensation are also built into this same “house,” for it is added, “whose house are we.” This shows conclusively that it is a house consisting of the spiritual material of believers, that it embraces the believers of both dispensations on one and the same condition,—“If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”